



MEGAN BASSETT, a senior accounting and Spanish major, and her 14-month-old daughter Mia, play peek-a-boo while Bassett fixes dinner. Before having Mia, Bassett said, "I had so much free time."

Pregnancy comes with hard choices

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'I wanted no regrets'

Megan Bassett got pregnant shortly after classes finished in the spring of 1997, after the then-sophomore Spanish and accounting major went home to Ogallala for the summer.

She said she never went through denial, as many women going through unplanned pregnancies often do.

In fact, though her first two home pregnancy tests were negative, Bassett kept testing until one showed positive.

Emotionally, she could accept the fact she was pregnant, she said.

"It was just what I was going to do from that point on," she said. "That took awhile."

After finding out she would be having a child, she moved back to Lincoln in mid-July so she could "get her ducks in a row" before approaching her family.

In Lincoln, she moved into a house with three other women and a man. By the summer's end, three of the women, including Bassett, were pregnant. That helped her handle the pregnancy. But she had yet to tell her parents.

"Even if (parents are) the most understanding people in the world, they want the best for you, and that doesn't really mean having to struggle."

Bassett moved again at the end of August and told her parents she was pregnant shortly after.

Parents want their children to go to college, get married and be financially stable before having a child, she said.

This wasn't her case. But when she was five or six months pregnant, after meeting with a counselor and thinking her decision through, she made the final decision to keep her daughter, Mia.

It was an individual decision, although she admits family and friends didn't always approve when she broached the subject.

"I pretty much probably always was going to (keep Mia). I just needed to make sure," Bassett said. "What I always said was, I just want to make sure five years down the road I'm not having this kindergartner and wondering what I'm doing or how I got here."

After deciding to keep Mia, Bassett started preparing for her daughter's arrival.

She found a baby sitter about seven months into the pregnancy, and she looked at renting a two-bedroom apartment. She scheduled her classes around Mia's schedule-to-be. She needed the nine months to prepare for the overwhelming change.

Before having Mia, she volunteered nearly 30 hours a week and was involved with Residence Hall Association. "I had so much free time," she said.

Though she had planned to move off campus anyway, she hadn't planned such a drastic change

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Student voices vary on sex survey

BY KELLY ROMANSKI
Staff writer

During the yearlong Clinton-Lewinsky scandal, the media reported daily on sex and sexuality, and many public and private discussions on the subject ensued.

Yet some definitions of sexual activity and behavior remain subjective or unclear, according to some University of Nebraska-Lincoln students.

The Daily Nebraskan conducted an unscientific survey of about 150 students living in greek houses and residence halls via written and anonymous questionnaires.

Students who responded gave a variety of answers to many of the same questions that stumped a country, including "Can oral sex be considered the same as sexual intercourse?" or "What actually comprises sexual activity?"

"There has been some confusion about it, as far as the public is concerned," David Story, a sophomore news-editorial major, said during a small DN-sponsored discussion on sexuality. "I think sex is a broad term that encompasses any activity that leads up to it."

"When I hear 'sex,' I only think of intercourse," agricultural economics freshman Chris Gustafson said. "The rest is sexual activity."

"The attitudes of students breaks down into each person individually," Story said. "There's a whole lot of people out there who take sex as their responsibility, who would be cautious with it. But then you run into the extreme of the players and such that are simply out to get laid, and are good at doing so."

"And then there is the conservative, opposite side that wants nothing to do with sex until they're married."

Students from all backgrounds responded to the following questions. The following excerpts show a variety of students' perspectives on their own and others' sexuality.

Two female and two male students' replies were excerpted for each question to illustrate the majority opinions of each sex.

Question: "Do students at UNL think about the possibility of a sexually transmitted disease or an unplanned pregnancy directly before sex?"

Males:
 ■ No. "People normally do what feels good and sex happens to feel good."
 ■ No. "I was positive that it would not happen with my partner."
Females:

■ Yes. All women who start taking birth control at the UNL Health Center must take a class that forces them to realize birth control does not protect against STDs. "They get to see these wonderful pictures of genital warts - and then they tell you there's no cure. That's enough for most people to forget AIDS and death - college students are afraid of blisters and deformities."

■ "Yes, I believe it is always in the back of a person's mind, but the question is whether or not they will act on their thoughts. I am always prepared, but sometimes don't follow through."

Question: "Do you believe that the couple who conceived a child should soon get married?"

Males:
 ■ No. "I believe it is case-specific. If the baby was conceived on a one-night stand, the couple being married may be more harmful for the baby in the way of an unhappy home."

■ No. "Just because a baby is formed does not mean marriage is necessary. I would urge to give the baby up for adoption, because there are so many couples who have the proper time, attention and money to raise a healthy baby."

Females:
 ■ Yes. "They should get married because that is what is morally right."

■ No. "The couple would be unhappy, thus would not be raising the kid well if the family is so unhappy."

Question: "What role does the male play after a baby in an unplanned pregnancy is born?"

Males:
 ■ "The role of a father, if I am not mistaken."

■ "For the most part, I don't think guys want to have anything to do with an unplanned pregnancy. After all, males are not the ones carrying the child. I feel that as a gender, we really need to take more sexual responsibility for ourselves."

Females:
 ■ "Full responsibility of caring for the child, because it is just as much his."

■ "He should be around to watch the child grow up and be active in his/her life. See the child at least once or twice a week."

Question: "Who should take the lead (male or female) in preventing the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases?"

Males:
 ■ "The male. It is easier for a man to use a condom than it is for a woman."

■ "Both, because it is both parties' responsibility."

Females:
 ■ "I think that it is a mutual thing. I think

both people should take the initiative."

■ "The male, because he can wear a condom no matter what."

Question: "Would you be afraid to buy protection such as condoms or forms of female contraception at a store?"

Males:
 ■ "No. I don't care what people think. Actually, I do. I think it's kinda funny because the cashier knows you're gonna get laid and he/she isn't."

■ No. "There are much more frightening things - like cockroaches."

Females:
 ■ "Yes, since everything is rather new. I still am shy about the subject."

■ "No; if you're old enough to have sex, you're old enough to use protection. If you can't go into a store and buy some form of protection, then you obviously aren't ready for sex. And if you aren't ready for sex, having sex will only hurt you in the long run."

Question: "Do you think alcohol plays a role in sexual behavior (not just having sexual intercourse)?"

Males:
 ■ "Yes, I do believe it does because from what I've seen, people are more apt to have sex when drunk."

■ Yes. Drinking "makes the couple more relaxed, so sex will probably occur at a better chance."

Females:
 ■ Yes. "Alcohol intensifies hormones, which leads to sexual behavior. Often with alcohol there are decisions made without thought. Therefore, people often engage in sexual behavior under the influence of alcohol. I think a lot of people also regret it (or something else in their lifetime because of sex and alcohol)."

■ Yes. "I think alcohol is usually the initiator in sexual behavior."

In one part of the survey, the DN requested additional comments. Several students wrote that being in college can be difficult for those who stick to their convictions and don't have sex.

One male wrote, "Although I have never had sex, it has been a constant struggle of mine. At times, I just want to get virginity over with to be like all the other guys. But then I look at the trouble sex can get you into, and then I realize why I have waited."

One female simply stated: "Sex ruins relationships outside of marriage."