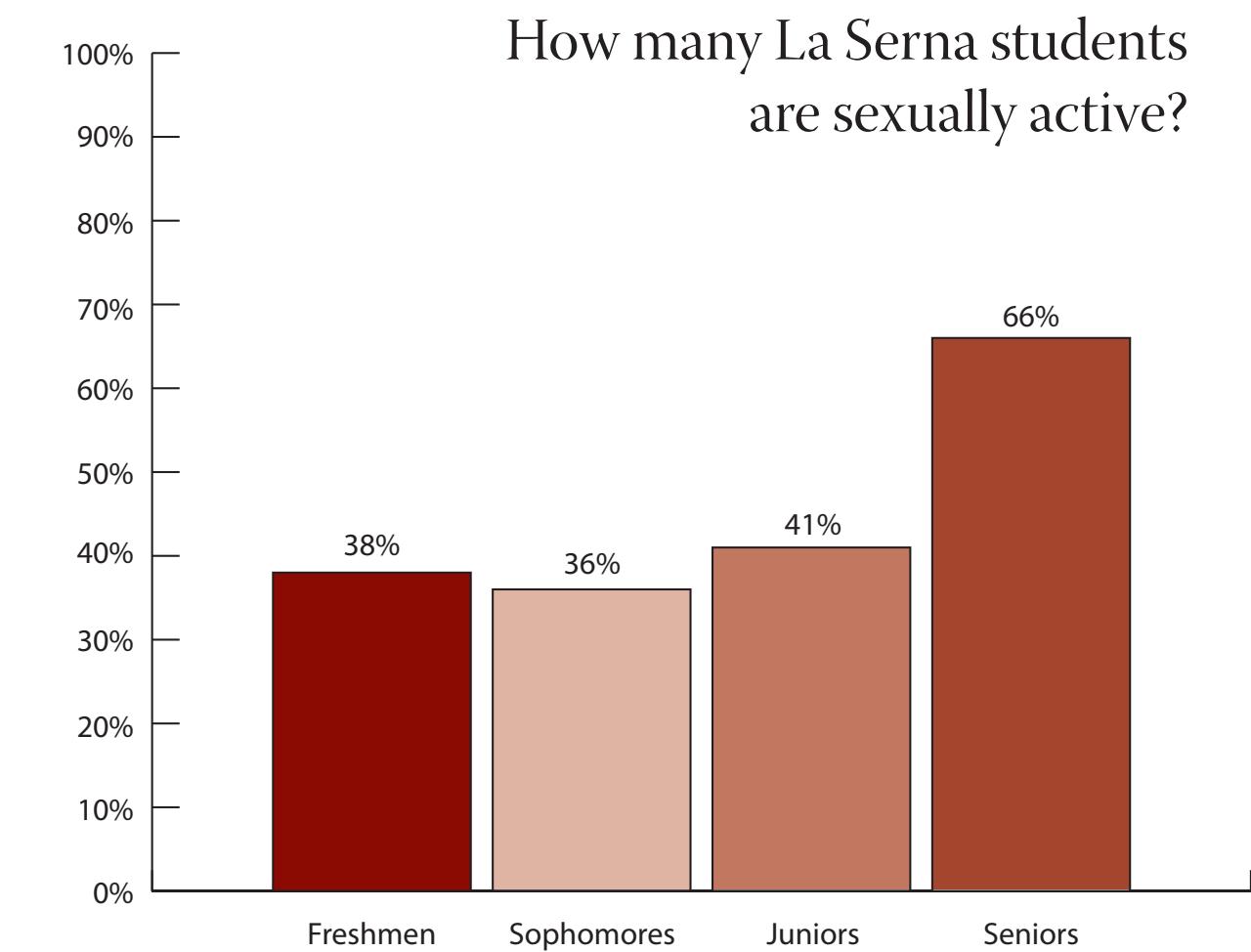


the **S** word



sex and the students

By **SERGIO HERNANDEZ**
EDITOR IN CHIEF

It's clearly no secret that high school students are sexually active. According to a poll by *People* magazine, nearly 41% of fifteen to sixteen year-olds are sexually active.

This month, *The Freelancer* took a look at sexual activity on campus by surveying a variety of La Serna students. According to the poll results, 49% of La Serna students responded that they've had sex.

When asked why they decided to have sex, students' responses were varied. "It wasn't a decision. I honestly wanted to wait until I was married, but it just kind of happened," said one senior. "I thought I was in love. I felt the guy would like me more," one female student said. A number of students also expressed why they chose to remain abstinent instead. "Everyone in my family got pregnant the first time. I don't want a baby at 16!" said another female student.

"There are other ways to enjoy life," said one student. "And I don't believe in pre-marital sex." "There are too many risks," added one senior. "Especially for a high school student." According to the poll results, 51% of sexually active students reported that they either don't use protection consistently or not at all. "It kills the mood," explained one student. "As long as you use a condom and the girl's on birth control, you don't have to worry about it too much." "You can't feel everything [with a condom]," stated one female student.

"I think before you have sex with someone they should be tested, but if not, then whatever. I believe in abortion and I would have one. Before, I was against abortion, but when I thought I was pregnant I changed my mind." "I don't sleep around," one female student said. "There is always the risk of pregnancy, which would suck, but I guess that's just a risk." Despite the inconsistent use of condoms and contraceptives, only 22% of sexually active La Serna students reported having been tested for any sexually transmitted diseases. Forty-four percent of the respondents claimed that they learned about

Sex Survey

- Do you use protection?**
Yes: 46%
No: 21%
Sometimes: 33%
- How many partners have you had sex with?**
1-2: 60% | 3-5: 24% | 6-8: 1% | 9+ : 15%
- Have you ever been tested for an STD?**
Yes: 22%
No: 78%
- How often do you have sex?**
Once a month: 31%
More than once a month: 23%
Once a week: 17%
More than once a week: 13%
Once a day: 8%
More than once a day: 8%
- Do you think sex is necessary for a successful relationship?**
Yes: 41%
No: 59%
- How did you learn about sex?**
Parents: 25%
School: 32%
Friends: 44%
- When should people have sex?**
Married: 20%
Committed Relationship: 57%
Casually: 23%

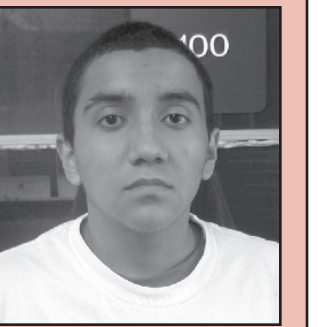
sex from their friends. Thirty-two percent credited sex education in school, and only 25% said they learned about sex from their parents. Meanwhile, 57% percent of La Serna students claimed that they believed people should only have sex in committed relationships, but many students expressed that the importance of sex varies from person to person. "It really all depends," one student said. "I feel like sex is a part of life, but as I have become more ex-

perienced, I'd rather have sex with somebody I truly have a connection with." "Why not [have sex]?" one student asked. "I don't understand why waiting for marriage or when you think you're ready is such a big deal." "I think however people are, then that's their choice," another La Serna student stated. "But I think that I believe in both; some people need/want sex to have a good relationship, some don't. It's whatever floats your boat."

LaSerna couple prepares for parenthood



JASMINE RAMIREZ



VICTOR DORANTES

By **CLAIRE WEBSTER**
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Although the rate of teenage pregnancy in the United States has been declining, it remains the highest in the developed world. Each year, approximately one million American teenagers become pregnant each year, and the majority of these — 78 percent — are unintended.

CW: Do you plan on going to college or just being a stay at home mother?
JR: Yes, I plan on going to college as soon as our son is old enough.

CW: Who is the baby going to live with? Why?
JR: For now he is going to live with me because Victor has to finish school next year.

CW: Who do you think this is harder on?
JR: I think emotionally it's equally hard, but physically it's harder on me because I have to carry the baby around 24/7 and it takes a lot out of your body.

CW: Have you lost any friends because of this?
JR: No, neither of us have lost any friends. We actually have gained more friends because they have become interested in my pregnancy.

This month, *The Freelancer* talks with senior Jasmine Ramirez and junior Victor Dorantes, a La Serna couple facing the difficult situation of preparing for teen parenthood. We discuss everything from how the couple found out about Ramirez's pregnancy, their plans for the future, and their hopes for the baby.

CLAIRE WEBSTER: How did your parents react when they found out that you were pregnant?
JASMINE RAMIREZ: My parents were okay with it because there was nothing they could do about it, but his parents were surprised when they found out.

CW: How has being pregnant changed your life?
JR: Being pregnant has changed my life in many ways. It has made me more mature. It has also made me work harder in my classes in order to graduate so my son can have a better life. It has brought me and Victor [Dorantes] closer than ever before. It made me appreciate all of the small things in life.

CW: How are you going to support the baby?
JR: Our parents are going to help us out until we get a job and have enough money to support him ourselves. We will also receive cash-aid from the state.

CW: Do you plan on getting married?
JR: Yes, we plan on getting married. Probably some time next year when Victor turns 18. We've always planned to get married even before I got pregnant. The day we met we knew we were meant for each other.

CW: What else can you tell us about your situation?
JR: I think that all of the teens out there who are having sex should protect themselves as best as they can because it is easy to make a baby, but it is not easy emotionally or physically to take care of the baby. It takes a lot of responsibility to be pregnant because you not only have to worry about yourself, but you also have to worry about the baby and if you are doing something wrong.

Staff Editorial

Let's talk about sex... education

Sex education policy in public schools has long been a hotly debated issue for a long time. While most people seem to support sex education, there is significant disagreement on how it should be handled in the classroom.

The major debate is between two particular ideas about how sex education should be taught: abstinence-only education versus what is called "comprehensive sex education," which includes topics such as contraception methods and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and how to avoid them.

Under President Bush's administration, the government currently endorses and has successfully worked toward the introduction of "abstinence-only" curriculum. Under such instruction, students are told that they should be sexually abstinent until adulthood and/or marriage, and information about contraception is not provided. Last year alone, Bush spent \$270 million of federal funding on abstinence-only programs.

Instead of using medically sound and accurate information, abstinence-only education utilizes scare tactics. Unlike comprehensive sex education, abstinence-only education fails to address very important and very real issues such as STDs and teen pregnancy. It is important to note that abstinence-only education has also proven to ultimately be very ineffective. In fact, according to researchers, several studies have shown that abstinence-only programs not only did not reduce the likelihood of pregnancy in women who participated in the programs, but that "abstinence-only" actually increased it.

An additional problem plaguing sex education in the United States is its disregard for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered students. Such students are often ignored in sex education curricula, which means information about certain safer sex practices are not discussed, nor are their different

risk levels for disease. Clearly, abstinence-only education is not only ineffective, but deprives students of crucial information necessary for them to make smart decisions. The impact of this issue and the way it is taught holds great importance for young minds. Research and statistics have shown and continue to support the fact that abstinence-only education is not only ineffectual and inferior to comprehensive sex education, but also a serious and dangerous detriment to all adolescents.

psychologists have often tried to develop logical theories that can explain human behaviors. Unfortunately, these attempts are in vain, largely due to the irrationality that possesses the vast majority of the population. A few weeks ago I was watching a news story on *60 Minutes* about another attempt psychologists have made to rationalize human behavior. This time they tried to do so on the causes of homosexuality: the reasons why homosexuals are attracted to the same sex. Unfortunately, each theory only debunks the other and has insufficient proof supporting it. Each theory I find to

Figuring out human sexuality: Why it simply isn't possible

By **THOMAS BAÑUELOS**
FEATURES EDITOR

be ridiculous because try to rationalize something that is irrational. The theory that it is a choice to be homosexual is one of the most ignorant and inane beliefs. I am proud to be gay; however, I would not wish the pain, isolation, self-loathing, and hatred of others that homosexuals often feel end endure onto my worst enemy. No one chooses to be gay; rather, they choose to accept themselves and be proud of who they are. Who would "choose" to be gay and subject themselves to treatment equivalent to a Turkish prison? Although it may seem like an exaggeration, the constant harassment, ridicule, and threats are a reality homosexuals must face. If someone "chose" to be gay, then they also chose to be treated as

a second-class citizen. Another fascinating theory is that children become gay because of the way they are raised. This of course makes sense, which is why homosexuals should not be allowed to raise kids. Having two gay parents, of course, would cause their children to become gay. Everyone knows that gay children only come from gay parents. In addition, if a boy is raised too "girly" or a girl too "boyish," that would result in them becoming gay. I mean, come on, there is no such thing as a gay professional athlete. There is no way gay guys could ever be man enough to play sports. Well, except for professional baseball players Billy Bean and Glenn Burke, professional foot-

ball players Esera Tuaolo, Jerry Smith, and Dave Kopay, or professional hockey player Mike Danton. All of whom have had very successful careers in their professions. There is also the theory that the attraction is all psychological: Men who were raised without a father figure in their life end up becoming gay. They do this to fulfill their need to be loved by another man through sexual means, or so my psychiatrist tells me. Which totally explains why there are so many gay children who come from the kind of stereotypical nuclear families that look like a replica of the Cleavers from *Leave it to Beaver*. It is not like politicians, who are meant to represent Americans and their families, would ever produce a homosexual child

or even be gay themselves. The exception, of course, being Dick Cheney's lesbian daughter. The last theory is that they are just born that way. It is just their nature to be attracted to the same sex. Of course, with this ideology stems more theories such as: the Older Brother theory, and hormonal variations in the brain from birth. The Older Brother theory suggests that the more older brothers a child has, the more likely he is to be gay. Unfortunately, this does not apply to many homosexuals who I know that are the oldest in their families, present company included. The hormonal differences between heterosexuals and homosexuals is the only theory that seems to best fit, although rather awkwardly, to be quite frank.

I have no problem with people trying to understand the reasonings behind people's motives. However, why is it that only homosexual behaviors are being analyzed and not heterosexual behaviors? Is it because homosexual behaviors do not follow the norm? And who determines what is normal sexual behavior? Not to mention that these theories are only developed for male homosexuals. There remains no theory that attempts to name the cause for lesbianism. Not only is there a double standard for heterosexuals and homosexuals, but there is one for gay men and women. People should stop trying to figure out why there are gay people. Instead, maybe they should try to figure out why they're so ignorant.

layout: sergio hernandez