

Entertainment Sex-Ed: A finely curated selection of smutty "teachable moments"

<https://entertainmentsexed.wordpress.com/>

"98% of porn movies actually show the actors having physically gratifying orgasms".

"That's going to make kids think they're doing something wrong when they find themselves in a thirty-minute struggle to arouse their frigid partner and then they fall asleep with their hand in her vagina"

"Children exposed to porn may expect sex to be enjoyable", *The Onion*,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4kwk5jV2nU>

Research shows that young people get much of their sex education from entertainment (McKee, 2012). The reasons for this are not difficult to understand. Much formal sex education doesn't meet young people's needs. It doesn't address the topics that they want to know about (Allen, 2008); and it doesn't teach it in the ways that engage them (Allen, 2006). Too much formal sex education still presents a negative view of sex—as a focus group respondent in one research project puts it, young people are still getting the message 'Just don't have sex. You'll get pregnant and die' (McKee et al., 2014b: 6). By contrast, entertainment often presents a positive view of sex, and it knows how to engage its audiences. As Buckingham and Bragg note, young people engage with entertainment precisely because it lacks "the over imposition of moral lessons" – indeed, imposing moral lessons "is precisely [the] kind of approach that leads some viewers to perceive [entertainment] as preaching and lecturing and to reject them on these grounds." (Buckingham and Bragg, 2004: 168). But even as young people use entertainment to provide 'teachable moments' (Fisher et al., 2010) about sex, the fact that entertainment deliberately avoids 'preaching' – the fact it allows for multiple points of view and discussion – complicates the use of entertainment materials for sex education (see the discussion in Tully and Ekdale, 2014: of the difficulties entertainment-educators found in using the soap opera format). It is not surprising therefore that some researchers want to promote what we might call an abstinence-

only approach to entertainment media, seeing it as a negative force and hoping to encourage young people simply to avoid it (Brown and Bobkowski, 2011).

This chapter reports on an alternative approach. The blog ‘Entertainment Sex-Ed: A finely curated selection of smutty "teachable moments"' provides a series of videos from entertainment culture that allow for interesting discussions about important aspects of sex with young people – or with anybody in your life with whom who might want to have a meaningful conversation about sex. The videos are mostly vulgar and funny – the kinds of material that young people report as important parts of their own sexual education (McKee et al., 2014a). Each video comes with a short introduction that positions the entertainment material in the context of an important aspect of sex education; and a ‘Study Guide’ with three questions to prompt discussion. Importantly, the ‘Study Guide’ is just as silly, vulgar and non-preachy as the entertainment material. Humour is often ambivalent and open to interpretation – that’s part of how it works. The questions in many cases don’t have right or wrong answers; and where they do, they are worded to be so egregiously biased towards a ‘correct’ answer that might not be the typical one in sex education that the fact the question is pushing towards a particular answer can, in itself can become a topic of discussion (‘Some educators argue that heterosexual pegging is a powerful feminist practice. In what ways are they right?’). The reader will also note that the material is not presented objectively. The voice of the author occurs frequently, and it is openly personal: ‘I love Broadway musicals and I love this clip. Am I a stereotype of a gay man?’. One particular element of subjective self-presentation might be of interest to readers: the author’s emerging belief that formal religion is one of the most destructive forces working against healthy sexual development in Western cultures (Gibson, 2007; Peppard, 2008) – and certainly more dangerous than than entertainment.

The rest of this chapter presents the material from the blog in the form it appears online.

Introduction from the Blog

Young people don't get enough information about sex from schools or parents. Many of them get their sex education from entertainment. That can go terribly wrong – most entertainment isn't designed to be used as sex education. So I created the *Entertainment Sex-Ed* site, providing interesting examples of entertainment to prompt engaging conversations about sex. Not everything on the site provides good, reliable information; but it should all be able to promote good, interesting conversations about sex. Got an example of entertainment that prompts interesting conversations about sex? Send it to profalanmckee@hotmail.com.

Teachable Moment 1: Human Biology 101

<https://entertainmentsexed.wordpress.com/2021/04/26/human-biology-101/>



Orange is the New Black: Netflix dramedy, or important breakthrough for sex education?

Some of the topics I've addressed in other blog posts might be controversial. But surely nobody could object to this most basic of sex education topics: biological information about how many holes we have in our bodies?

Eh, who am I kidding? Of course it's going to be controversial. Sex education is so politicized that even telling young people that they have genitalia is going to offend some people – do I hear the distant whine of voices screaming “Sexualisation!”? “Just let kids be kids!”? However, I assume that anyone reading this blog believes that keeping

young people ignorant about their own bodies is A Bad Thing, and we can continue with this lesson unabashed. Watch the video. Use the Study Guide. Talk to young people in your life about basic biology.

Warning: this video includes women discussing their genital anatomy, and includes the use of a mirror to settle the argument. Maybe NSFW, depending on where you work.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nW1A1M3lgPc>

Study Guide: as you watch this video consider the following questions:

1. How many holes do you have?
2. Can you find them all?
3. Would you like a mirror?

Teachable moment 2: Masturbation (boys)

<https://entertainmentsexed.wordpress.com/2021/04/21/a-masturbation-talk-for-boys/>



What would you like to tell the young people in your life about masturbation? Let's watch an inspiring tutorial from *Weeds* and use that to think about what and how we might talk about wanking.

For many years (decades) it's been accepted by sexual health specialists that masturbation is a great part of healthy sexual development. But surprisingly there's been a recent re-emergence of worries about "masturbation addiction" (aka "porn addiction"). In the old days the urban myth was that masturbation made you go blind, or gave you hairy palms. Today, conservative Christians, and some psychologists, worry that masturbation is dangerous because it promotes selfish sexual pleasure. That's nonsense. Sexual health specialists tend to believe that masturbation is a good way to raise sexual agency and comfort with sexual pleasure. Who you gonna believe, eh? (oh, yeah, Christians are really the best people to listen to about healthy sexual development!) Good thing to talk about with the young people in your life.

Watch this video and use the Study Guide below to spark conversations with young people who should maybe be masturbating more than they currently are.

Warning: the video includes explicit discussion of male masturbation, and the phrase "polishing the raised scepter of love".

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJkEwbVdcQY>

Study Guide: as you watch this video consider the following questions:

1. If this isn't the "best practice" for a masturbation advice talk, how would you improve it?
2. How much masturbation is too much? How much is just enough?
3. Where is the girls' version of this video?

Teachable moment 3: Binary Gender roles

<https://entertainmentsexed.wordpress.com/2021/04/26/binary-gender-roles/>



Let's use a hilarious song from *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend* to discuss binary gender roles. It's important. Trust me.

Trans people have become more visible in public debates recently; this raises some issues you might want to discuss with the young people in your life. More trans voices are talking openly about their own experiences, and this has triggered some people who are furious that trans people are starting to shake off the shame imposed on them by cisnet society. One response to increased trans visibility has been a coalition of conservative Christians and radical feminists insisting that "there are only two sexes" and "it's science!". We suspect that these people have never lived in a male or (particularly) female body and thus experienced the sheer amount of hard work that can go into creating one of these "natural" binaried bodies.

Help a young person in your life think through this logical fallacy by watching this clip from *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend* and then using the Study Guide to start a conversation about the constructed nature of "natural" binaries.

Warning: this video includes waxing, exfoliating, bleaching, plucking, a spray of ass blood and a promise to "Whisper your dick hard".

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AJmWuNKabtM>

Study Guide: as you watch this video, consider the following questions:

1. How many of the procedures listed in this song have you tried?

2. Which is your favourite? Which is the worst?

3. Would the world be a better place if men put a bit more effort into their appearance? Or does that miss the whole point of the song?

Teachable moment 4: Respectful Relationships

<https://entertainmentsexed.wordpress.com/2021/04/26/respectful-relationships/>



Can Amber Rose inspire useful conversations with the young people in your life about what exactly is “respectful” in a “respectful relationship?”. You bet!

You may have heard concerns about young women becoming too “sexualised” these days. This is code for “slutty”. A lot of current “respectful relationships” education teaches young people that it’s not respectful to have casual, filthy, hot sex; and that the only really respectful relationships are the ones where you wait until you’re in love to have sex, and then do it in the dark with the lights off.

This module addresses important questions that arise from concerns about sexualisation. Are young women these days too slutty? Are they behaving in stereotypically masculine ways – that is, having sex, enjoying it, and not feeling that they need to get married to do so? Are women practising sex with a number of partners,

therefore raising their expectations so that if they end up with a partner who is really bad at sex, they expect better? And if this is the case, how appalled should we be?

If there's a young person in your life, what advice do you want to give them about keeping their legs crossed, or lowering their expectations about heterosexual sex? The work of Amber Rose provides an inspiring teachable moment here. Let's watch this "Funny or Die" video, and then use the Study Guide questions below to inspire a conversation about how slutty each of us wants to be.

Warning: the video includes discussion of casual sex, explicit décolletage, a child saying the word "fuck", and a woman refusing to give a man her phone number.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=68kmBoUru-k>

Study Guide: as you watch this video, consider the following questions:

1. In what ways is Amber Rose in this video a role model for young women?
2. In what ways is Amber Rose in this video a role model for young men?
3. Should Amber Rose have told her sexual partner that she didn't want to see him again before she left?

Teachable moment 5: Pornography's effects on consumers

<https://entertainmentsexed.wordpress.com/2021/04/26/pornographys-effects-on-consumers/>



I love the satirical website *The Onion*. They made this amazing video about the effects of pornography on consumers and today we're going to use that as a teachable moment. "Children exposed to pornography may expect sex to be enjoyable" runs the biting headline. Burn!

Many people are concerned about the effects of pornography on young people. And who can blame them? There exists quite a coalition of people making this point, including social psychologists, radical feminists, conservative Christians and nice middle-class people who think that sex should ideally be as quiet and peaceful as possible in order to fully express your love for your partner. An honest conversation with the young people in your life about porn needs to balance a sex-positive attitude that embraces all kinds of consensual filth with advice about the less practical elements of pornographic sex. How to start such a challenging conversation? Well I recommend watching this hilarious video and then using the Study Guide to prompt a conversation that talks honestly about your vision for good sex – including whether it should be fun.

Warning: this video includes a short clip from a mainstream heterosexual porn movie, jokes about killing sex workers, and extensive disrespect for cultural commentators who are concerned about the effects of pornography on young people.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4kww5jV2nU>

Study Guide: As you watch this video, consider the following questions:

1. Can sex be fun? Should it?
2. One of the commentators in the video says that sex leaves you “numb and shivering for days” – have you ever had sex like that? Do you know anybody who has?
3. Can you forgive this video for calling sex workers “whores”? Why/not?

Teachable moments 6: Pornography addiction

<https://entertainmentsexed.wordpress.com/2021/04/26/pornography-addiction/>



As part of sex education you want to talk to the young people in your life about pornography, right?

Pornography. Many people enjoy it. Many people masturbate to it. Is it addictive? What is the difference between really enjoying something and being addicted to it? Is there someone in your life who masturbates a lot, and you’d like to talk to them about it? And if so – you’d be better be confident before you start that you’ve got a good answer to the question “What’s the right amount of masturbation?”.

It's going to be an awkward conversation so you might as well have a laugh about it. A study by Australian researchers found out that young men get a lot of their information about sex and relationships from vulgar comedy programs like *Family Guy* – so why not lean into that and use it to spark a teachable moment?

Watch this video where Quagmire discovers porn on the internet and then use the Study Guide below to talk openly and frankly with the young people in your life (or even with the not-so-young people in your life) about how much wanking is too much. That's the kind of teachable moment that more of us need in our lives.

Warning: this video includes references to pornography, and a graphic depiction of the terrible dangers of pornography addiction.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dY7qTlu0PO0>

Study Guide: As you watch this video, consider the following questions:

1. How much wanking is too much?
2. How much wanking is too little?
3. What is exactly the right amount of wanking?

Teachable moment 7: Representations of women in the media

<https://entertainmentsexed.wordpress.com/2021/04/21/last-fuckable-day/>



A key part of healthy sexual development is becoming comfortable with our own bodies and making peace with the fact that we're sexual beings. For each of us this happens in a cultural context where we are told by a variety of voices what we should look like in order to be considered sexy. Women in particular are surrounded by messages telling them how to dress, cut their hair, do their makeup – even how to move ... These messages come from television, adverts, schools, parents – and churches, of course, who are some of the worst offenders. Did you know that in the Pentecostal Church to which Australia's Prime Minister belongs, women are not allowed to wear trousers "because they immodestly reveal the feminine contours of upper leg, thigh, and hip" – ? Seriously, what kind of message does that send young women about their bodies?

As we learn how to make sense of our sexual selves in the context of our cultures, we can find some help from vulgar American comedian Amy Schumer. In this video Amy looks at the messages women get from films and television about how old you can be and still be considered sexy: or, in Amy's inspired language, "fuckable".

Watch this clip, and then use the Study Guide talk about it passionately with people who need to learn more about how their sex lives might change as they get older.

Warning: this video includes extensive use of the word "fuck".

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vDz2kcjWpOs>

Study Guide: as you watch this video, consider the following questions:

1. Is it a good thing to be fuckable?
2. Are you fuckable?
3. Do you think the people the media thinks are fuckable are fuckable?

Teachable moment 8: Representations of gay men in the media

<https://entertainmentsexed.wordpress.com/2021/04/26/representations-of-gay-men-in-the-media/>



An important part of sex education is helping people become comfortable with their sexual identities. And some of us are big flaming queens. Good on Neil Patrick Harrison for helping us discuss this with the young people in our lives, with his Tony-awards opening number “Broadway: it’s not just for gays any more”.

What kinds of role models do young queers have available to them as they navigate this decreasingly cishet world? Well certainly more than I did growing up in a village of 200 people on a distant island in 1970s Scotland that’s for damn sure. Hurrah! In the old days we used to say that representations of gay men being feminine and cissy were bad because they were “stereotypes”. Implied in this critique was a denigration of effeminate gay men. But now that we’ve increased the number of queer and gender diverse representations available to young people we need a more sophisticated language to explore the role of the media in giving young people ideas about sexual identities. And luckily we can use Neil Patrick Harris singing a very faggoty song to explore with young people around us their dreams and ambitions for sexual identity. Use the Study Guide to talk about these issues. (and you might add to the Study Guide – is it OK for the old queen who writes this blog to use the word “faggoty”? Discuss).

Warning: this video includes extensive Broadway-style singing and dancing, Brooke Shields failing to remember her lines, and the couplet “Come in and be inspired/There’s no sodomy required”.

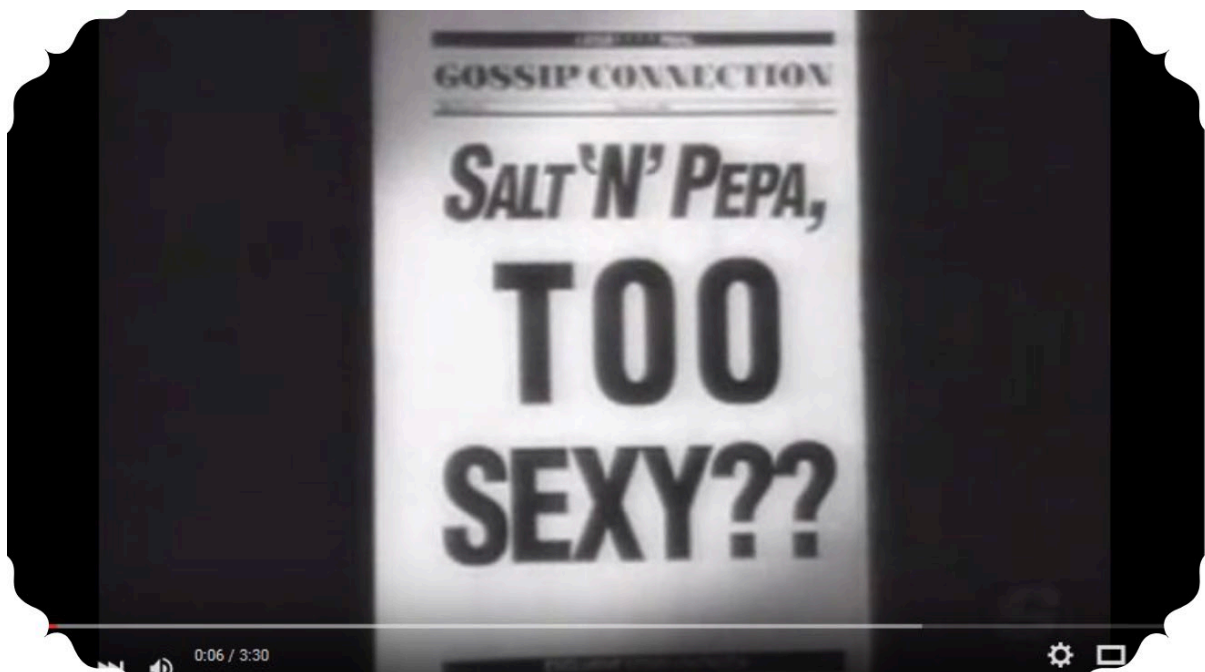
Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3BHyfYiBt5o>

Study Guide: as you watch this video, consider the following questions:

1. How many different kinds of queers have you seen in entertainment?
2. I love Broadway musicals and I love this clip. Am I a stereotype of a gay man?
3. What are the pros and cons of being a stereotype?

Teachable moment 9: A woman’s right to choose (what kind of work she wants to do?)

<https://entertainmentsexed.wordpress.com/2021/04/21/is-it-your-business/>



Let’s listen to Salt-N-Pepa, and then talk about whether women should be allowed to engage in sex work.

Formal sex education doesn’t typically talk about sex work. Which is odd, because it’s an important aspect of sex for a lot of people. It’s also a topic of heated public debate.

Increasing numbers of sex workers – particularly women – are speaking for themselves about their experiences. Many argue that while sex work is not perfect, it is as good as – or better than – many other forms of work: particularly the kinds of low-paid service-industry work that is typically available for women and people of colour. For these workers, problems with sex work need to be addressed through mechanisms like Occupational Health and Safety structures.

On the other hand, a coalition of conservative Christians and radical feminists argue that under patriarchy, all sex work is necessarily sexist and must be controlled by the state. These debates can trend into wider discussions about whether young women these days are too slutty.

How can young people navigate these debates? Let's make that part of sex education. Listen to what Salt-N-Pepa have to say on this topic, and then discuss it using the Study Guide below.

Warning: this song includes discussion of sex work.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w2FJ8xzcBdc>

Study Guide: as you listen to this song consider the following questions:

1. Is it any of your business?
2. Can you think of any situations where it would become your business?
3. What jobs would you like to make illegal? Why?

Teachable moment 10: Anal penetration (heterosexual, male, receptive)

<https://entertainmentsexed.wordpress.com/2021/04/26/anal-penetration-heterosexual-male-passive/>



This website presents entertainment material that's perfect for promoting conversations leading to "teachable moments" about the kinds of sexual topics you might want to raise with the young people in your life. It has generally avoided discussions of specific sex acts. But we should make an exception for pegging (or "heterosexual male receptive dildonic intromission" as social scientists might call it, if they talked about such filth) because it raises a series of interesting questions about what straight people do in bed, the power relations involved, and whether men should ask to put their penis in a woman's bottom if they're not willing to have a go themselves. What do we think? Could all straight men benefit from sticking their ass in the air and having it penetrated? Would it open their minds, so to say? Or is it only a niche of hetero blokes – a "subset" if you will (sub? Get it?) – who would benefit from such an experience? You could go straight to *Bend Over Boyfriend* – but that might be a bit confronting for some conversational partners. Luckily *Broad City* is here to help. Watch Abbi and Ilana discuss the issues raised by pegging, and then use the Study Guide to have your own conversations about the politics, pleasures and practicalities of straight men taking it up the bum.

Warning: this video includes sexual miscommunication, a hairy chest, a strap-on dildo and friends who talk openly about anal sex.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RFdpjW3hunI>

Study Guide: as you watch the video, think about these questions:

1. Have you heard of pegging before? From your parents, sex ed in school, or somewhere else?
2. How could Jeremy and Abbi have improved their communication in this conversation?
3. Some educators argue that heterosexual pegging is a powerful feminist practice. In what ways are they right?

Teachable moment 11: Sex within marriage

<https://entertainmentsexed.wordpress.com/2021/04/26/sex-within-marriage/>



Sex education often focuses on the messy, interesting business of having sex for the first few times. But let's not forget about "lifelong learning" – it's possible that you might end up having sex with the same person for several years. Several decades, even. Goodness me, that brings its own full set of challenges, doesn't it?

Or does it? How much of sex should be about passion, enthusiasm and novelty? How much should be about keeping your socks on because your feet are cold?

Today's entertainment resource lets us talk about this in a fun, non-preachy way with the help of *Flight of the Conchords*. We all love *Flight of the Conchords*, and we're delighted with their ongoing success in ventures as diverse as starring in *Men in Black* movies and writing songs for Miss Piggy. But do we think enough about how we might use their work to improve sex education through teachable moments? Let's watch them raising the age-old issue of having good sex within a relationship, and then use the Study Guide to prompt a lively and productive conversation with young people in our lives that's bound to lead to some teachable moments.

Warning: this video contains pixelated male genitalia, a man wearing socks to make love, and a cynical view of the sexiness of committed relationships. Also – you may be asked to talk about how your own sex life is doing after many years with the same person

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUdT9yBVL68>

Study Guide: as you watch the video, think about the following questions:

1. What challenges might exist to having hot sex within a long-term loving relationship?
2. How might we overcome those challenges?
3. How important is hot sex within a long-term loving relationship? Is it more or less important than having someone who's willing to take the bins out?

Bio from the blog

Professor Alan McKee is an expert on entertainment and healthy sexual development. He recently completed an Australian Research Council Discovery grant entitled 'Pornography's effects on audiences: explaining contradictory research data'. He also worked on an ARC Linkage grant with True (previously Family Planning Queensland) to investigate the use of vulgar comedy to reach young men with information about healthy sexual development. He was co-editor of the *Girlfriend Guide to Life* and co-author of *Objectification: on the difference between sex and sexism* (2020). He has published on healthy sexual development, and entertainment education for healthy

sexuality in journals including the *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, the *International Journal of Sexual Health*, the *Journal of Sex Research and Sex Education*.

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