



# daily bedpost

sex on the brain with em & lo,  
dr. kate and distracted  
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DIRT 05.06.2008 by em & lo

## College Confessional: Let's Talk About Sex, Not Masturbation



Our sex-positive intern *Ariel Servadio* fights for her right to talk about the power of pulling one's pud in her college magazine:

I recently wrote an [article for Pulse](#)--the magazine put out once a semester at Hofstra University, where I'm a student--on there being more to one's sexual health than remaining disease-free. I brought up things like buying QUALITY condoms and giving sex toys a try.

When I threw masturbation into the mix as one of the ways to stay sexually healthy, it rubbed the journalism department the wrong way (no pun intended). The faculty wanted the three paragraphs addressing the topic (which didn't even contain the actual word "masturbation") gone completely. Apparently, WITH the 'graphs, my story "largely focused on promoting masturbation". Besides, they said, the copy didn't tell readers anything they didn't already know--it just "extolled the joys of sex." Some other choice phrasing and quotes had to go, too: "materials that sex toys are made of" was turned into "materials for bedroom use" and a quote about dental dams was removed.

Without these changes, my story couldn't be published...

I was shocked. For one thing, with or without those paragraphs, it was still clear I was talking about masturbation, so really, what's the difference? Besides, I was writing to a college audience--they wouldn't be offended whatsoever by this material. But I honestly felt I WAS telling them something new, at least for most college students--I wasn't bringing up the topic of



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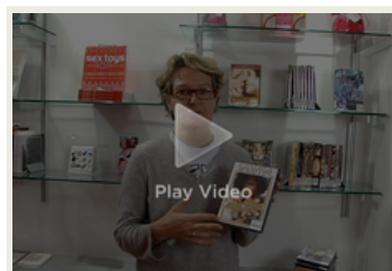
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masturbation to say, "You should play with yourself, it feels really good"; I was arguing that being in tune with your libido, and using masturbation to manage it at times when you aren't having sex (whether you're single, or in a relationship--it happens), contributes to good mental and physical health. Finally, how could I write an article about what YOU can do for your sexual health, without mentioning the one thing you and YOU ALONE can do for yourself?

Making the above arguments over and over to the powers that be kind of made me feel like a sex-obsessed pervert. I never thought I'd have to repeatedly hash out details about wanking with a professor. Becoming an advocate for masturbation...boy, would my parents be proud.

In the end, I got a whole paragraph and two sentences of the offending three into the edit of my article that went to print. And I complained enough to get **the whole story, masturbation paragraphs intact, online.**

To any given reader, the two versions probably won't look very different. I'll admit I was a bit attached to the material--and as a young writer, I'm learning how it's never fun to be edited heavily. But to me, the two versions are like night and day. Because to say that you should look into sex toys without mentioning that you might want to actually use them on yourself--by yourself--is out of hand, literally.

-- by *Ariel Servadio*

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## Tags

[College](#), [Masturbation](#), [Writers](#)

## 2 Comments

### Colin said:

I write a relationship column in one of the publications and I remember I had to fight really hard in one issue about safer-sex on campus to keep my masturbation segment from being called too obscene for publication. Wasn't nearly as contentious however and was resolved in an e-mail or two.

Why are people still not ready to talk about sex for one?

May 6, 2008 10:55 PM

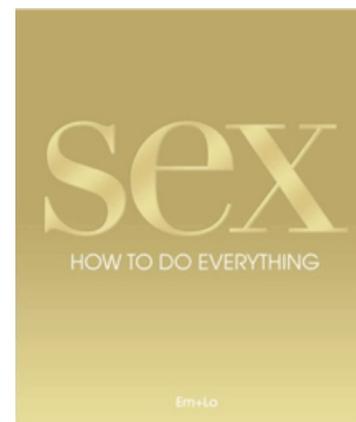
### profsex said:

Right On Ariel! No it is never fun to be edited and yes, how ridiculous to have to explain to your professor how healthy it is for one to be "in touch"....and even if you were a sex-crazed pervert? So what? Good for you and though I'm sorry you were so censored, I am thankful you have this forum. I wish all of my students were like you...don't let them get to you!

May 7, 2008 8:30 AM

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## about em & lo

Em & Lo, more formally known as Emma Taylor and Lorelei Sharkey, are the self-proclaimed Emily Posts of the modern bedroom.

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about  
dr. kate

Dr. Kate is an OB/GYN at one of the largest teaching hospitals in New York City. [more >>](#)

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