

Despite stereotypes, virgins do exist on Hofstra's campus.



Everybody's Not Doing It

By ARIEL E.M. SERVADIO

Hofstra students hold on to their virginities for themselves, not God

DAYVA SEGAL ISN'T A VIRGIN BECAUSE OF HER religious beliefs. She's not really worried about getting pregnant or an STD, because she knows the importance of practicing safe sex. Quite simply, it just hasn't happened for her yet.

"I just haven't had a relationship with someone where I wanted it to happen yet. I'm not waiting for marriage or anything like that, I just want a meaningful connection with someone," she says.

And Dayva, a 20-year-old music merchandising major, isn't alone.

"It's a personal choice," says Brandon*, a 21-year-old junior. "I've always been a romantic and I never felt like it was something I needed to 'get done' with. I've never really felt like the time was right before."

Neither Dayva nor Brandon fit the stereotypical virgin mold: a Bible-toting Christian, waiting for marriage.

"My choice is based on my moral beliefs," says Brandon. "I made a personal vow to not sell out and

become the typical sex driven adolescent."

Kelly Cole, a 20-year-old theater arts major and a self-described "proud virgin," defines a virgin as "someone who has never had intercourse; they may have partaken in other activities, but never intercourse."

"I've had a lot of sexual experience, but I've never had sexual intercourse," Dayva affirms.

Virgins today are not necessarily opposed to engaging in sexual acts, it's just the big one that's off limits. "It just takes things to a different level," adds Dayva.

Not to mention, there are more risks involved. Sure, prophylactics and hormonal birth control are great in preventing pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases to a certain point, but nothing is more absolute than abstinence.

It doesn't take long to figure out that, once clearly defined, virginity is a touchy subject. In many ways, it's just as, or more, taboo than sexual orientation.

Just as many young homosexuals seek sanctuary "in the closet," often people who have yet to have sex wish to remain closeted, too.

Trying to find virgins to participate in this article is a testament to that.

There were rules, concerning sensitivity. One couldn't be approached in public, at least not if there were other people around. Most searching was done electronically, discretely. An open invitation to speak out on being a proud virgin garnered little response.

Individuals were then sought out based on their expressed interests or organizations they were a part of, in the kindest, least intrusive way possible. Most responded with a "not interested" or "I'm not comfortable talking about that." Many didn't respond at all.

While Brandon kindly agreed to be interviewed about why he is still a virgin, he was the only male out of countless people approached that would even agree to be a part of the story, even under the guise of anonymity.

More females were willing to talk about their virginity, but nearly all of them wanted to remain anonymous as well. Only Dayva and Kelly agreed to speak out with full disclosure.

In some cultures, being a virgin is prized. Even Sigmund Freud comments in *The Taboo of Virginity* on how a young woman's virginity is so highly valued in many societies. However, in our culture, especially in that of the horny college student, being a virgin implies that you lack maturity and experience, sexually and otherwise.

In a study done by the Journal of Sex Research in 2001, 21 percent of women and 57 percent of men viewed virginity as a stigma.

"Just because I'm a virgin, doesn't mean I'm a nun!" Dayva laughs.

Kelly has a different story.

"[Sometimes] I suddenly look uncomfortable when people discuss their sex stories. It's not that I don't want to hear it, or that I want to be preachy, but I feel left out of the conversation because I have nothing to add," she says. "Let's face it, a bad kiss story doesn't hold a candle to a bad sex story."

But then, Kelly is a different kind of virgin than Dayva or Brandon. She's not just waiting for the right person; she's waiting to marry the right person.

"I am religious, but that's not the main reason I'm a virgin," Kelly says. "I made a promise to myself that I would give my [future] husband something that I can never give anyone else."

Kelly views her virginity solely as a choice. "I've had my fair share of boyfriends... and I'm proud for sticking to it," she adds.

One thing all three of these virgins have in common is that they started thinking about their virginity a long time ago.

"[When I was] around 14, I made a pact with my three best friends at the time," says Kelly. "Although, I may be the only one left [now]."

"I actually used to be really worried about it," Dayva says. "When I was 18, I thought, 'Wow, I'm 18 and I'm still a virgin!'"

I guess, when I was lot younger, I thought that I

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would have [lost my virginity] by now."

For Brandon, it was a little later.

"I never actually thought about it until the end of high school."

Another experience they all seem to share is coming close to "losing it."

"This is the biggest misconception about those who chose to be virgins!" Kelly exclaims. "Most people assume that if it's your choice to be a virgin, then you must have no sex drive. I have just as much temptation as any other college girl, but that is my sacrifice."

And it's no doubt hard to keep your sex drive in check when you're in a serious relationship, as Kelly is. Sometimes a person's decision not to have sex can negatively affect a relationship, but in Kelly's situation, that's not the case.

"My current boyfriend respects and admires [my virginity] so much, and when others may make jokes or assumptions about us, he sticks up for us."

Brandon, also, has never experienced any negative response, and while he's never been in a serious relationship, he's getting there.

"Now I'm actually with a girl that I'm considering having sex with," he says. "I was honest with her and she was completely supportive of me being a virgin and hasn't pushed me or rushed me."

Dayva has only had positive reactions to her virginity in relationships, too.

"I've never had a relationship end because I didn't want to have sex. I was in a relationship that didn't become serious because I didn't want to, though," she says. "But I know my being a virgin won't even matter to the person I finally choose to have sex with."

"I think in some ways, being a virgin makes people more attracted to you, because there's this desire to corrupt you," Dayva adds, laughing.

When asked if they saw themselves as being virgins for a certain amount of time in the future, all three had different answers.

Kelly's is definite. "Until marriage, I'm determined."

Brandon's attitude is a little more carefree. "I don't really think about it that way. It'll happen when it happens. It's not about a specific time for me, but rather a specific person."

And Dayva, perhaps the most uncertain virgin, has put a lot of thought into it.

"I don't know, it really depends," she says. "Sometimes I have days where I feel like, 'Oh my god, I'm going to be a virgin forever!', and other days I'm like, 'Oh, I really don't know when it's going to happen,' and I'm okay with that."

I mean, it could be a year, it could be five years, and it doesn't matter. I think if I was 30 and I was still a virgin, I might be a little depressed... but it would be on my own terms, so it would be all right." ■