



**Wild & Sublime® Podcast, Episode 8**  
**“Better Sex Ed with Heather Corinna”**  
**Sept 17, 2020**

**How much sex education did you get in school? Was it (how can we say this politely) at all useful? Sex educator and writer Heather Corinna talks about founding the popular website Scarleteen and their books on sex and relationships for pre-teens, teens and young adults. Storyteller Archy Arch J tells a tale of high school sexual experimentation with (gasp!) his girlfriend. And Karen’s Sermon on the Pubic Mound about making more room for pleasure in everyday life.**

**Host: Karen Yates**

**Guests: Heather Corinna, Peter/MksThingsHappin, Archy Arch J**

[Music under]

Heather Corinna

The fight is always had, over — that there isn't sex ed in schools, and everybody should have it. And what everybody's fighting for is like, a two- or three-week course.

Archy Arch J

Thank god Cheryl knew what she wanted — dick — and realized what stood in her way: *my gay ass*.

Karen Yates

You can't go have these really high, intense pleasure experiences and then go treat yourself like crap.

Welcome to Wild & Sublime, a sexy spin on infotainment®, no matter your preferences, orientation or relationship style, based on the popular live Chicago show. Each week, I'll chat about sex and relationships with citizens from the world of sex positivity, with spicy additions from storytellers and musicians. I'm Karen Yates. In today's episode, I interview Heather Corinna, the founder of Scarleteen, the popular sex ed site for teens and young adults. Plus, a storyteller recounts his senior year with a beard... named Cheryl. And my Sermon on the Pubic Mound® about pleasure. Keep listening. Wild &

Sublime is sponsored in part by Uberlube, long-lasting silicone lubricant for sex, sport and style. I highly recommend it. Go to Uberlube dot com. [Music ends] So this week, we are continuing our mini-arc of episodes where we look at the cultural assumptions that we picked up when we were kids — you know, how do we dismantle these assumptions or beliefs around sexuality? But then, going forward with our kids with the next generation, how are we... How are we revising some of these messages that might not serve anymore. I interviewed this guest at our March 2019 show. Heather Corinna is a sex, health, and relationship author, educator and activist, and is also the founder of Scarleteen, one of the first and the longest-running inclusive sex-positive and comprehensive sex education online resource for young people, with over 8 million views a year. They have written "S.E.X.: The All-You-Need-to-Know Sexuality Guide to Get You Through Your Teens and Twenties," and co-wrote with Isabella Rotman "Wait, What?: A Comic Book Guide to Relationships, Bodies, and Growing Up." At the time of this interview, the book "Wait, What?" had not yet come out. Have a listen. [To live audience] Okay, how many people know what Scarleteen is? [audience cheering] Awesome. So if you if you haven't been to the site, Scarleteen dot com, it is this extraordinarily comprehensive sex ed site. Great if you're a teen or an adult to get information. [to Heather] And you do so much on that site! Message board service — for-free direct support services, message board, text service, one-on-one with kids, online chat, and an advice column with individual questions. Wow, how do you get it all done? How much staff do you have? What's going on? Tell me more.

Heather Corinna

You know, normally we have a pretty tight staff. We usually only have about 12 to 15 people. Most of those people are volunteers — not everybody's volunteers. Most people work remotely — we're a website, so we get to be able to do that. Some people are from around the world. Our users are from around the world, so that makes sense. A lot of the direct services — we have so we have 8 million users a year at the site. But just to kind of put it in perspective: of the direct service that we do, that's like .001% of the traffic. Most of our traffic, people are reading articles, they're reading columns — and some of them, too, when we have the public-facing direct services. So the message boards, way more people will lurk and read the boards than people who will necessarily participate. Like, if anybody in here has ever written advice columns, the interesting thing about writing an advice column is that you have to always know it's not just for the person that you're writing it for. Ultimately, it needs to mostly be for that person. But so many more people than that person will read that one piece.

Karen Yates

Right. And what I notice about Scarleteen is that it is so inclusive. You have — I was typing in, like, autism, disability, fat. So much — and like, you just have oodles and oodles — and they're first person accounts, a lot of them, correct? The essays people write.

Heather Corinna  
That depends.

Karen Yates  
Mmhmm.

Heather Corinna  
I think one of the things that's funny is that over the years, though, we'll kind of hear people say to the side about Scarleteen, like, 'Oh, and it's inclusive,' like that's a weird thing. And it what it discounts is that, you know, for instance, as a queer person, I wasn't going to make a website from the front that wasn't inclusive of queer people. Like, I don't even know how I would do that, [laughs] even know how on earth I would do that, right? And our staff have always been really diverse, and so — and our users are diverse. So there's — unless we were ignoring what everybody was bringing to the table and somehow asking everybody not to just represent themselves, it would have been impossible for it not to have that kind of diversity.

Karen Yates  
And when you first began, you know, 20 years ago, what did you — because it looks so expansive. I mean—

Heather Corinna  
I started it 20 years ago... [laughs]

Karen Yates  
Yeah — what was it like? [laughs]

Heather Corinna  
Well, 20 years ago, I had this profoundly naïve idea that everybody was getting, like, whatever "Free to Be You and Me" would have translated into as sex ed. I was like, that should happen, right? Because that's so nice, and—

Karen Yates

You're rolling, you're rolling... [audience laughter] [To audience] Try that, guys. It feels really good. Rolling, ahhh — doesn't it feel good? Okay. [laughs]

Heather Corinna

But, you know, I started getting questions in, as somebody doing sex ed work for adults, and I kind of thought these were the outliers, right? So, the people that had questions, like, this was extra, because they weren't — just, these small things weren't covered. So I thought we maybe needed like, five or six pages, and those would be [audience laughter] — I know, right? Like, it's profoundly stupid, what I thought. But it's, uh — it was, it still is, right? That that would supplement all of the great information that they were not getting anywhere else. So every time that we would answer one question and put up a page, like, a whole 'nother flow would come through. So it's just, you know, I mean, now I think at this point, between articles and advice columns, it's, you know, it's 10,000 pages, maybe?

Karen Yates

It's kind of like — it's sort of — your story reminds me, yes, sex is really complex. It is a complex subject, and the vastness of the site kind of reflects the vastness of the complexity.

Heather Corinna

And it's unique. I mean, that's the thing. Like when everybody's kind of in a fight about what's the right kind of sex ed, and they're trying to come up with — and I don't want to piss on having sex ed in schools. I think sex ed should be everywhere we can have it, right? And then wherever anybody wants to access it, because that feels like the right place for them, they can get it. But the fight is always had over that there isn't sex ed in schools, and everybody should have it, and what everybody's fighting for is like a two- or three-week course. Right? They're fighting for this thing that is so basic. That, yes, we should have it, and and yes, it should be good, but it can also only be so good when it's three weeks at a maximum, 45 minutes in a classroom, full of high schoolers or middle schoolers, usually in kind of a public-school toxic-social environment that aren't going to be asking their personal questions because it's not safe at school to give personal information. And so, even in the best-case scenario, where people get a good sex ed course, they're not necessarily going to have their personal situation — nobody's going to sit down with them, especially a public school teacher risking their job—

Karen Yates

Right.

Heather Corinna

To sit — as if they could even answer most of those questions — to sit down and go through someone's unique problems that they're having with masturbation, or with their boyfriend, or with coming out, or with figuring out what their identity is like. It's just, it's really personal, and it's very individual.

Karen Yates

Yeah, I mean, I was looking at the message boards, and like, you know, kids are asking very specific questions that need specific answers. And you provide that.

Heather Corinna

Well, and that's the other tricky thing is that, you know, in the 20 years since we've been around, there's a lot of A.I. that's starting to crop up about this. Before A.I., there were widgets, there were services that are kind of trying to answer these questions with templates, where you — you know, on the back end, you're pushing a button. There's not a person to talk to. And it doesn't work. It doesn't work.

Karen Yates

That just scared the shit out of me. A.I. answering sex questions. [audience laughter]

Heather Corinna

It's, you know — A.I. doing sex ed is not — I don't think it's scary. I think it's crappy. Like, it's just not good. I don't think anything terrifying is happening. It's just that more times than not, if you ask A.I. a personal question that's super specific, it's just going to keep saying, 'I'm not sure what you're asking.' Right? You're going to try and ask it a different way, and you're going to keep trying to ask it until you hit the algorithm that's going to give you the like, 'You should wear a condom,' and that wasn't even the question that you were asking.

Karen Yates

Right. I wanted to talk about the first of your books, "S.E.X." And this is a really fabulous book "S.E.X.: The All-You-Need-to-Know Sexuality Guide to Get You Through Your Teens and Twenties." And thirties, and forties, and fifties. This book is really extraordinary. It's kind of a — it is, I thought it was going to be just pure, I don't know, anatomy? I don't know. It's a philosophical tome —

Heather Corinna

That'd be a lot of anatomy.

Karen Yates

It would be! 'What makes the family?' I'm just going to— [reading section headings] 'What's the right age for sex?' Petting, massage, premature ejaculation, sexual differences versus sexual incompatibility, 'who's in charge?', abuse and assault. And there — it's really beautifully written. I highly recommend this.

Heather Corinna

Thank you.

Karen Yates

Yeah, right on. Really good, good stuff. [audience applause] And let me also say, you know, volunteers, Scarleteen volunteers...? Donations..? Yeah, okay? So...

Heather Corinna

We like money. [audience laughter]

Karen Yates

Money is a good thing. And as you would expect, this isn't a multi-million dollar operation they got going here. How long did it take you to write this?

Heather Corinna

Well, that's the second edition. The first edition, six years.

Karen Yates

Wow. Yes! That makes sense.

Heather Corinna

Well, and it went through two publishers, actually, is the other thing. I mean, it's kind of funny. When you do pleasure-based — everybody right now, I'm really glad to hear people finally getting with it. Like, it's so funny right now, for me to hear people being like, 'Pleasure should be part of sex ed,' that I'm like, we've been saying this for two decades, I know! And it's good. It's good that everybody's caught up. But it's — at the time that I was writing the first one, you kind of had the publishers that do sex books, and then you have Y.A., and there's not — the publishers who do sex books don't usually do young adult, and the publishers that do young adult don't usually do sex. And so, both of those publishers are really bad with this book. [audience laughter] Like, there were different things that made them very uncomfortable, or things that they wanted that just weren't going to work out. So yeah, six years the first time through.

Two different publishers. The second time around, actually, the nice thing is, I remember the first time with both publishers I had, I had to have a lot of arguments about stuff that I didn't feel like I should. Arguments about gender inclusivity. Arguments about, you know, assuming from the front that adolescents wanted to have sex because they wanted to have a good time. I know it's crazy. But it's true. Some people really want to have sex for that reason. [audience laughter] And the second time around with the book, I kind of came through to my editor and and laid out all the things that I had to fight for the first time and said, I don't have to fight for these things anymore, right? And they said, 'Nope, we get it.' So, it was actually a lot easier the second time.

Karen Yates

Awesome. And now you have a new book for middle schoolers coming out.

Heather Corinna

I do.

Karen Yates

Called, "Wait, What?" A comic book for preteens. You wrote it with illustrator Isabella Rotman.

Heather Corinna

I did.

Karen Yates

And it is tremendous. And it's also good for people with developmental disabilities.

Heather Corinna

That's the plan. Yeah, so I'm super excited about this. So it's, it's a comic book. It also is an activity book. There's paper dolls.

Karen Yates

It's nice. I've seen a draft.

Heather Corinna

There's a word search... Like, I'm a little excited about it. Because I likes me an activity book. So our thought in doing it — and we started that four years ago, and it kind of came in fits and starts — is that even when you've got, especially people in middle school, getting sex ed — and here's the weird thing. I don't know if everybody knows

this, so I'm kind of like, trying to gauge the age of the room. And I think so... If you had the idea that even in schools where there's not sex ed, they still got those really stupid puberty classes where they tell you about periods. They don't anymore. Most of them don't.

Karen Yates  
What?

Heather Corinna  
No. Most of them are not getting—

Karen Yates  
They don't play the Walt Disney cartoon with the ice cubes?

Heather Corinna  
Right.

Karen Yates  
Check it out online. YouTube, Walt Disney—

Heather Corinna  
Those are amazing.

Karen Yates  
Yeah. Really weird.

Heather Corinna  
It was during World War II to that they made those. Those are crazy. [laughter] Yeah, right? So basic, kind of — I mean, it wasn't great health education to begin with, but it was something. And no, a lot of them are — like, I'm having to explain how menstrual periods work to 25-year-olds all the time. Because that's not what's happening. But our thought with the kind of middle school comic is that you can — whether it's a Scarleteen or it's a Planned Parenthood, you can look up birth control methods, you can look up safer sex. Like, there's a lot of stuff that you can look up online now and you can find it. What you can't so much get is a social education. So for middle schoolers particularly — and we were just talking about this over here — is that, like, you know, middle school is generally a very harrowing experience for everyone, particularly around sex and relationships, and sexual identity, and bodies changing, and people's relationships changing, and all those things. And so what we really

wanted to give them was a model of how to talk to each other about these things and just kind of be with each other around this stuff. And so the way that the comic works is, it's five friends and they're all talking about stuff together. And the other thing that we wanted to show is that middle schoolers can know — can educate each other. They absolutely have the skills. We might have to give them some information, and we might have to give them some mentoring and modeling like this, about how to talk to each other with sensitivity, and how to accept each other's differences as things are changing. So, that was really what we were going for. We kind of think of it as like a sex ed prequel. Like, if you got all of these things, then if you went into sex ed that wasn't super great, but it was rudimentary enough, you'd probably come with enough of the skills that actually mattered, that you could look the rest of it up. But you can't really look up so well how to not be a dick to your friend when they come out. Right? Like— [snapping from audience]

Karen Yates  
Right. Yeah. Okay.

Heather Corinna  
So it's exciting.

Karen Yates  
It is very exciting. And that comes out in September.

Heather Corinna  
That comes out September 3. You could preorder it now.

Karen Yates  
Preorder it. Women & Children First. Simon and Schuster. Yes. Heather, thank you so much.

Heather Corinna  
Thanks for having me. [applause]

Karen Yates  
We will return in a moment with a Q&A session that Heather took part in from that same show. But first, a commercial for this show. I have, by the way, been listening to a lot of public radio, and I've been memorizing some of the phrases they use. So how are you liking the Wild & Sublime podcast so far? Do you like it? Would you like to support our weekly venture with a small monthly donation? Consider joining our

membership program on Patreon, where members get discounts, bonus content and more. You know, a lot goes into making this podcast, and any amount of support you could give us would be welcome. Monthly subscriptions start at \$5 and are flexible. Currently we have a very cool discount offer from our guest from the last episode, sexologist Jennifer Litner. She is giving Wild & Sublime Patreon members 15% off her sex ed course for parents in helping them navigate talking about sex with their kids. This offer is good at any level until October 15, and you can find the link to Patreon in our show notes. Now it's time for the Q&A with Heather. A large part of this audience question and answer was featured in Episode Six, so check that out. In this following segment with Heather Corinna, you'll also be hearing from kinkster and Dom Peter, aka Mksthingshappin, who was in Episode Six as well, giving his kinky take on staying authentic while raising kids. Enjoy.

[In front of audience] Here's two questions that are somewhat similar. And I'm going to — and they are for, I think, everyone, but especially Heather. "I want to foster an open, sex-positive environment for my kids. Suggestions?" And, "Any suggestions for parents to break the cycle of sex lies in the face of societal norms?" Oh my gosh, yeah.

Heather Corinna

I actually think those two go together though. Which is to say — so the parent that says that they want to have that environment, the first thing that they're going to do is tell their children that they want to have that environment. Right? They're gonna start and say, Hey, this is how I want things to be when it comes to sex in our household and our family, so let's start talking about that. What does that mean? And then, the one that wants to break the cycle, it's because you're the parent that says this. Also, I think that there's a lot of — and you're gonna decide, based on how it is with your kid and what your relationship is with them, and where they're at in terms of their development. But there's a lot of value, I think, in parents and guardians, and just other adults that are in their lives, really talking to young people — I mean, within young people's interest; if their eyes are glazing over, don't keep talking to them — about how it was for you, when you were coming up, with those things. Because, one, how it was for you when there was — [inaudible] is going to show up in how you parent them around this anyway. And so then, it's almost going back to what you were talking about, in terms of spotting people in relationships. You empower your children to be able to say, you know, think that maybe, for instance, you're saying that it's so, so important who I have sex with the first time because of that thing that you told me, about how you were raised around virginity. Maybe it's not. So what do you really think about it? Right. Cool.

Peter/Mksthingshappin

I wanted to add to that. A couple of months ago — I have two children. A daughter that's 12, my son that's eight. And you know, just like when my sister and I were younger, my my daughter hit my son. Just play-hit, but he was not happy, and he started crying. And my initial reaction is, you know, you don't hit anyone. And then it hit me. [audience laughter] Just the night before... [laughs] Just the night before, you know, I just did a really intense impact scene, with someone who consented to be hit. So it felt... false. So, rather than just doing the normal script of, 'you don't hit your brother, you don't hit your sister,' which felt false, I changed the conversation to, 'you don't hit anyone unless they consent.' And of course, there's a big question mark in her face — what are you talking about? And then I proceeded to explain the concept of consent. And quite frankly, they didn't fully get it. But that's okay. It introduced the concept to them. And I felt better as a parent, because I was living more authentic, I was being age appropriate, and kind of give them a message that really could serve them well for the rest of their life.

Karen Yates

Yeah. [audience applauds] I'm really impressed. That's like, a really cool way to — it's like a slalom course. You found your way down.

Peter/Mksthingshappin

Why are you REALLY impressed, though? [laughs] SO impressed?

Karen Yates

I'm REALLY impressed. [laughter]

[Music under]

You'll find information about Heather Corinna in our show notes, as well as our Bookshop affiliate link to purchase Heather's two books mentioned in this episode. By purchasing through Bookshop, you'll be helping both independent booksellers *and* Wild & Sublime. And on Tuesday, September 27, 7pm Central Time, I'll be appearing with Heather Corinna and Omisade Burney-Scott, host of the podcast "A Black Girl's Guide to Menopause," to talk about sex, health, relationships and community during perimenopause and menopause, on a Facebook Live stream hosted by Rebellious Magazine, our media sponsor. It is going to be pretty cool. I will be talking about somatic work, energy work, and Tantra. And a lot more. [brief music] I want to give a shout-out to Sara in New York state, who wrote on our Facebook page, "This podcast is a bright spot in my week. It's fun and informative, and I'm so very happy to have

learned about it through a friend." Thank you, Sarah. Another person said, talking about episode six, "Sex Lies was a profound topic. The panel was so genuine in sharing." I agree. It's always super exciting when someone posts their reactions to the show on social media. And I'm going to invite you to do the same. Just go onto Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or Fetlife — yes, we are on Fetlife, Wild & Sublime — and react to one of our posts. Let us know what you are thinking. And then I might read your comments on the podcast. How does that happen? Well, you know what, I would contact you. I just wouldn't grab your quote. I would write you — I would DM you. Yes, I would. I would DM you and ask if it was okay. And maybe you wouldn't want your full name. That's cool. Maybe you just want your first name, or you don't want your name at all, maybe you just want me to say you know, 'a listener in Arkansas' — which actually isn't possible right now, because we don't have any listeners in Arkansas, which really needs to be amended ASAP. So if you have a friend in Arkansas, just please send them this episode. But maybe you live in some other area. I'm happy to say where you live, and your comments. So think about it. [brief music] Our next segment was recorded December 2019. Archy Arch J is a storyteller and the curator of OUTspoken, an LGBTQ storytelling series in Chicago. Enjoy.

Archy Arch J

[In front of live audience] I always feel like I'm the most perverted person in a room, and I don't feel that way today. [laughter and cheers] And that is very new and comforting for me. So thank you. I can't grow facial hair for shit. However, in high school, beards were my life. Girlfriends protected me. [laughter] Get it? Girlfriends protected me from being completely labeled a fag, and allowed me to live in a justifiable denial because although I knew what blowjobs were, and which classmates, teachers and janitors I wanted to give them to, I'd look at my reality and see a girlfriend. This allowed me to dismiss my homo urges, and made me feel so... normal. Also, as a teenager, I was just starting to discover the pleasures my body was capable of. So anyone touching it, especially someone besides myself, felt like discovering gold. Senior year, I met Cheryl. Cheryl and I met at a haunted house I went to with a group from my temple. Cheryl, who was not part of my temple, came with my friend Anne. When Cheryl saw me, she has Anne to ask me if I thought she was pretty. I looked at her mocha Filipino skin, her wavy, thick black hair, and her incredibly coordinated Bebe outfit and said, "Sure!" Halfway through the haunted house, a ghost rounded the corner and said, "Boo." Cheryl screamed and backed into my arms. And by the time we exited the haunted house, we were holding hands. A few days later, we were boyfriend and girlfriend. Cheryl had fuckin' game, and over the next few months, I would ditch my last-period study hall a couple times a week and drive from Nazareth High School down I-94 and down I-57 to Cheryl's bed, where we would mine for gold until her dad came home at

5pm. Now, the gold-mining restricted itself to the first three bases, until January 15, 1996. A day that also happened to be Martin Luther King Day. On that day, freedom rang. On that day Cheryl let me put my peepee next to her weewee, and it eventually slipped in. Neither of us said a word. But the Rosie O'Donnell show began playing in the background. And before that lesbian icon, I remember thinking, oh my god, I am not gay. I am straight. I looked at Cheryl, scared of what I assumed — I assumed it was her first time, and that she might be hurt a little bit. But she had obviously done this before and she was totally fine. So freedom continued to ring in missionary position for the next 120 seconds, until I realized I was about to come — inside a person! Rosie was still doing her opening monologue. I panicked, pulled out, and had my orgasm in a familiar spot — from my right hand and into my left. On the drive home, I felt like I had outsmarted fate. I'd had sex with a woman. Taunting be damned, I am straight. Like any teenage boy who suddenly finds himself a man, I listened to Madonna's "Evita" soundtrack on my way home. And though I had always pictured myself as Evita, I told myself now I am Che, and began singing his lines. But sometimes you can feel a sense of confidence about a lie, and even look at factual events to support your lie. But inside, you know it doesn't matter. The truth is stubborn — malleable, but unyielding. So I'm driving home and 75% ecstatic that I'd become a man. But there's 25% of me that knows that I'm still Evita, and because I'm a gross boy who doesn't wash my hands after sex, I keep smelling my hands, because I want that lingering center turn me on. But it does not, ever, at all. The next night I talked to Cheryl. No one has ever been happier about 120 seconds ever in the world. "I bought a whole box of condoms! There's like, 30 of them." Cheryl was really excited to do it again. I, however, was terrified. Terrified, because deep down, I knew our sex had been an accidental miracle. With my earlier girlfriends, sensations were new, so erections were easy to get. But by the time I was with Cheryl, I was a foreplay-jaded, 17 year old who had to use my imagination to get an erection around her. And by "use my imagination," I mean I pretended sure was Mike Szymanski from gym class, Ray the skater whose locker was next to mine, Keanu Reeves, or Tony Tedeschi, my favorite straight porn star, who came through a scrambled Playboy Channel I received in my bedroom. So that night, before I was to have sex with my girlfriend for the second time, I told myself that if I could have sex with a woman for the second time, I would earn my heterosexuality, and my homosexual desires would start to dissolve. Denial is a hell of a drug, y'all. And thus, I rehearsed closing my eyes and getting hard by imagining these naked men, and then maintaining that erection while I thought about Cheryl. All the while, I reassured myself that this is what all the boys in high school had to do to have sex with their girlfriends. And I confirmed this theory by keeping it to myself and asking nobody. The next day, practice did not make perfect, and the condoms didn't help. Putting a condom on was not as easy as my mother had demonstrated with a banana. The result

was something akin to a half-eaten gummy worm begging for mercy in a Ziploc bag. My hopes I could be straight deflated and I panicked, because there was Cheryl, anxiously waiting to be pleased, and I am such a people pleaser! So I did the next best thing. The thing the men on the Playboy Channel did that now strikes terror in my fully homosexual heart. Cunnilingus. Now, I am not saying vaginas are gross. They're beautiful, I'm sure. But some people like cats, and some people like dogs, and some people like cats and dogs. All I fucking know is, I'm allergic to pussies. But my one-on-one conversation with Cheryl's vagina only bought more time. Cheryl wanted the D, not the T, and after a few more attempts, she broke up with me. Did I [inaudible]? Yes. What happened in your childhood? I'm just kidding. Did I did I cry a river of tears after that, lady? Yes, I did .But those tears were tributaries leading away from denial. Thank god Cheryl knew what she wanted: dick. And realized what stood in her way: *my gay ass!* While I was swirling around in my own world of alternative facts, Cheryl brewed some hot tea and served it up. "Hey, Archy," she said, leaving a voicemail. "I don't think someone like me can make you happy. Do you know what I mean?" It'd be another year until Matt Lebugan would show me what she meant in the back of his mom's Geo Tracker. But you know who, or what, knew? My dick. Some people say mind over matter, and sure, that can be true, especially on acid. But they also say men have two heads, and once in a while — okay, maybe once in a long, long while, it's better to listen to the one that can spit the truth, amongst other things, in your face. Thank you so much. [applause]

Karen Yates

For more info on Archy and OUTspoken, which is now a virtual event and podcast, go to our show notes. [Music under] Wild & Sublime is also sponsored in part by our Sublime Supporter, Chicago-based Full Color Life Therapy, therapy for all of you, at [fullcolorlifetherapy dot com](http://fullcolorlifetherapy.com). If you would like to be a Sublime Supporter, showcasing you and your business and supporting us at the same time, contact us at [info at wildandsublime dot com](mailto:info@wildandsublime.com). And now, it's time for my Sermon on the Pubic Mound. This was recorded at the March 2019 show, the same show where I interviewed Heather Corinna, and the show that forms a large part of Episode Six on sex lies. So you're going to hear a number of references from that panel. And at first, I wasn't going to put it on this particular episode, but then as I was thinking about it, I thought some of the ideas that I talked about here, not only my ongoing [laughs] my ongoing issues with overwork, but some of the concepts around pleasure strike at the heart, I think, of some of the sex lies that we all grapple with. Enjoy.

[In front of audience] You know, the past couple days, talking to the panelists before we did the show tonight, we're talking about, you know, binaries, and black and white

thinking, and that's such a part of the lies that we were told as kids — that you can be this way, you know, forward facing, but *this* way, you know, inward facing, not as good. Or, you know, you're holding on tight. And I started thinking about my own past and the lies that were true for me. And I grew up as a really, really fat kid. You know, I would stare at myself in the mirror, and I would just like, hate myself. And just heap a lot of, you know, abuse on myself internally. And while I was more than happy to self-pleasure, by the time I started having partnered sex, that didn't really work — I wasn't able to really communicate to my partners what I wanted, needed, because I really didn't think I deserved to ask for pleasure, or even have pleasure with them. Because I had just despised myself for so long. Even after I lost weight, it was something I had to work on all the time. And to be honest with you, I didn't really work on it, you know, until much later in my life. And now it's much, much better, because I had to put effort into it. Or, you know, when I was with a partner, really work through some of these ideas, think about them, talk about them. But one of the things I'm thinking about now in my life, in a larger issue, beyond sex, is the way I compartmentalize everything in my life around pleasure. And what I mean by that is, you know, have sex — great, ooh this is really fabulous! — and then treat myself like shit. You know, sit too long, working at my laptop, arrrr, and I'm not eating right, or I'm not getting enough sleep. And that's like, inflicting harm on myself. Right? And so what I'm starting to realize is that that doesn't really work. You can't like, go have these really high, intense pleasure experiences, then go treat yourself like crap. It's a whole piece. It's a whole pie. And so what I'm looking at now is, can I bring — and this has been alluded to, in and out of this evening. It's like, can I bring pleasure to myself every day — every day and in every way? You know, can I walk down the street and make it a pleasurable experience? Can I give myself pleasure — you know, if I'm sitting at the laptop, can I do something to ease the the exertion and the stress of just sitting there, sitting there, enduring. I talked about enduring on the very first show. Do I have to endure? I don't have to endure. No one's standing over me saying, "You must endure." I can get up. I can take a walk, I can come back. And so I guess that's what I'm going to leave you with. It's just that — you know, I believe that pleasure is our birthright. And we live in an anti-pleasure society. And it's that simple. Pleasure is shameful. And this is a message that has been carried on down through the millennia. Pleasure is shameful. And that's not the way it always was. And you know what, that's not how our bodies are built. Our entire body is a pleasure organ. It's not just about down here, you know, and even your eyelids can experience pleasure. The top of your scalp can experience pleasure. We have an incredible mechanism. And so I really urge all of you, as you go out into the world, think about: how can I give myself more pleasure on a daily basis? It doesn't have to be just about sex. There's more to it than that. Because the pleasure you give yourself will reward you. It makes you able to have more

pleasure. You know, pleasure is a multi-channel thing. The more pleasure you give yourself in one area, the more pleasure you're gonna be able to have in another area. Whatever your pleasure looks like — it can be sensation and pain play. So I seriously urge — I urge you to think about this and experience more pleasure in your life. So thank you. [Applause]

[Music under] Next week, we go back to our very first live show, where we ask the question, "What is sex?" Our panel discusses. Thank you for listening. If you know someone who might be interested in this episode, send it to them. And please, if you like what you heard, give us a nice review on your podcast app. I'd like to thank Wild & Sublime associate producer Julia Williams and design guru Jean-Francois Gervais. Theme music by David Ben-Porat. Our media sponsor is Rebellious Magazine, feminist media at rebelliousmagazine dot com. Follow us on social media @wildandsublime and sign up for newsletters at wildandsublime dot com.