

Ep. 30: Second Adolescence w/ Eva Bloom (they/she)

📅 Thu, Nov 10, 2022 6:22AM ⏱ 46:08

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

queerness, queer, people, adolescence, lesbian, feel, sex ed, sex, experience, science communicator, journey, pandemic, life, space, eva, hear, sexuality, talking, women, thinking

SPEAKERS

Adam James Cohen (he/him), Eva Bloom (they/she)



Adam James Cohen (he/him) 00:10

Hello Hello and welcome to this week's episode of the Second Adolescence podcast. I am your host Adam James Cohen. Before going into today's episode for those of you who are new to the show, I wanted to give us a quick overview about what this show and Second Adolescence is all about. I am a psychotherapist who works predominantly with queer people and do a lot of work with this idea of second adolescence, which I conceptualize as a sort of developmental life stage we queer people need to grow through in our post coming out years After navigating our first adolescence in this anti queer world. For many of us we miss out on the same kind of adolescence experiences and subsequent development that our cis, straight peers had access to leaving many of us feeling as though we're going through another adolescence, a Second Adolescence when we try to live fully as our queer selves in adulthood. This show the Second Adolescence podcast features conversations with queer people about their own second adolescence is talking about what their own process has been in finding growth and healing after growing up in this anti queer world. Today's episode marks the end of our third 10 Episodes Season, after which we're going to be taking a little bit of a break returning with new episodes in January 2023, which will mark our one year anniversary of the show, which is so wild. Oh my gosh, that's a separate episode, I'll have to record this to share how meaningful this has been. But to keep it short for today. Yes, this will be the final of this 10 episode season. And then we'll be coming back with new episodes in January. And gosh, for this 30th episode of the show, we have such a special one. This week's guest is sex educator and sex science communicator Eva Bloom, who uses they/she pronouns in this conversation they share about the journey they had that led them to the work they do in the world now, which perhaps many of you listening might be familiar with, because you already follow their work, which is awesome. And for those of you who are new, I am excited to introduce them. Along the way, Eva will also let us into their own personal journey sharing with us about being a queer person who didn't have conscious awareness of their queerness until after adolescence. And as with other people with a similar story, Eva recounts lots of those hindsight 2020 examples where we can look back and see our queerness budding and expressing itself before we ourselves might be aware of it. They go on to share about what really went down and their gradual evolution of having their queerness come out more to the forefront and what it was like for them to then

bring this into their life and discover what it was communicating about their identities. And really how this ended up changing so much of their life. This was such a great conversation, I feel so grateful to Eva for wanting to come on and let us all into their story. And as with each episode of second adolescence, I really want to invite you as the listener to listen with open curiosity, knowing that each of our stories are different and unique, you might hear some guest share things that really differ from your experience, whereas other guests might share things that really speak to what you went through or are currently going through. And I really hope that all of this happens and that together, we can continue growing and expanding our awareness of what life and queerness and healing can be for folks, if after the show you want to connect further, feel free to head on over to [second adolescents pod.com](http://secondadolescentspod.com) For show notes and more. Or you can follow the show on Instagram at [secondadolescence pot](https://www.instagram.com/secondadolescencepod). All right. Thank you so much for being here. Welcome to the conversation. So good. Welcome to Second Adolescence.

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 03:55

Thank you.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 03:56

Yeah, I'm so excited to have you here and just yet really, really eager to see what comes up in this conversation. But I guess before going anywhere, I always like to invite the person on your end just to give a little mini introduction to provide listeners a little context who the person is behind the voice and with us. I imagine like there's lots of different places to take this right. There's so because there's also I know there's so much that you do and that you offer in the world. How do you like when you're in a space like this introduce yourself?

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 04:22

Yeah, so my name is Eva Bloom, I use a and she pronouns. I am a non binary queer, lesbian, sexuality educator and a sex science communicator. Yeah, I have been on the internet since 2016, making sex ed content and since like going on my own sexuality journey, it has kind of become more about serving queer and trans people. So yeah.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 04:53

Oh, cool. Okay, and I know we're gonna dive into the work you're doing in the world. And I guess like one question I'm having in this moment, I've never heard the phrase being a sex science communicator, I love that could you share with us how you came to that label and also what that means?

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 05:07

Totally. So I in my like career journey for a long time was very academic focused. I like went into a research based undergraduate program, I was like, I'm gonna get my PhD and become a prof and I found out about the world of sex research about these people who have like

prof and I found out about the world of sex research about these people who have like, dedicated their lives to theorizing and like collecting data on people's sex lives. And it was so exciting for me personally and professionally. So yeah, there are lots of people who are science communicators, and all sorts of different areas of science. I like to make sure that all the research that other people who are actively doing research on sex are doing doesn't just end behind a paywall for other academics to read, when I think so much of it is like can be so powerful and supportive for people. So yeah, kind of a knowledge translator is another maybe word that I use. Yeah, sec science communicator.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 06:08

I love it. And you're based in Canada, right?

E

Eva Bloom (they/she) 06:10

Yeah, I'm in Toronto.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 06:11

Okay, so I'm based in San Francisco, California, in the United States. And I'm just thinking about sex education in our country. I used to work in the school system as a therapist and just being observant to what kind of sex education is happening here. What is the culture of sex education in Canada? And perhaps in Toronto?

E

Eva Bloom (they/she) 06:27

Yeah. I mean, I'm sure there's lots to say here. Yeah, totally. Well, we had a big it became like more newsworthy, I think, around 2015, which is around when I kind of started getting involved in like sex ed, and advocacy, when we had a really cool lesbian leader of like the province of Ontario, and her party kind of spearheaded updating the curriculum and hadn't been updated since like, 1999. Which, you know, it makes sense that a lot changes in those years. Yeah, there was a lot of pushback people being like, no teaching our children how to masturbate. And we're like, that's not the same thing as teaching them medically accurate terms are their body parts. But yeah, so technically, we do have an updated curriculum. We then like, had a more conservative leader come in and like push some of the stuff back. But the reality is that there are still a lot of government funded Catholic schools don't teach a comprehensive, inclusive curriculum. And a lot of the people who are assigned to give this curriculum are still like, gym teachers, or like homeroom teachers who have no actual like, training and how to teach sex ed. So there are still I think there's this like illusion of like, Oh, we're doing really good. But when you actually, like, look into it, there's still a lot of gaps. Like when I was like ta at a university, I would talk to my students about like, what's your baseline knowledge coming in? And like, 85% of them would be like, I went to a Catholic school. I didn't learn shit. And I'm like, Okay, so in practice, its not working.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 08:06

Right. And yeah, so again, like, what a gap you're filling in your work now. That's so cool. Okay, so we're gonna get to work. But I guess like you were alluding to that your own personal journey also led you eventually into your work. So I guess like when you reflect on your own journey in your own queer journey, like where does that story begin for you?

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 08:23

Yeah, it starts with me founding my High School's Gay Straight Alliance. In 2011, I had no idea. I was queer. At a summer camp, I heard a friend who went to an art school, they had a GSA and my brain was literally like, well, they have a GSA, we should have a GSA. And like, no shame, no fear. I was like, Wait, this just needs to happen. Put posters all over the school. I was like, why are all these teachers kind of like hesitant to be our supervisor? This is like a cool thing. But yeah, I started doing like many sex ed lessons in the GSA space. Whoa, what did that look like? What were you able to talk about that in the school set? Yeah. I use a lot of unlearning, like gender roles and like, scripts and stuff like that.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 09:14

Wow. Oh, cool. Okay, but so interesting. Yeah. So it sounds like in your adolescence, queerness was not something that you were consciously aware of at the time in terms of your own identity. And so yeah, like, well, I guess looking back, what is that like for you to kind of look back at teenage you founding this GSA, but also not necessarily identifying as like an active member of the queer community? Yeah, what comes up as you just look at that?

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 09:38

Yeah, it's so wild, like a full circle moment I was doing where I was maybe meant to end up from the beginning of going to like queer youth conferences, because in Toronto that was happening. I went to like queer prom. Like, yeah.

 09:57

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 09:58

Uh huh. So then. Okay, so leaving high school again, in terms of your relationship to your identity, are you identifying as a cisgender person or a heterosexual person? Like, how were you conceptualizing yourself at that age?

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 10:11

Yeah, so I got into my first like, long term relationship this summer after high school with the cisgender man, and we were together for three years. So I think I was definitely like, I am straight. Yeah. And then a lot of like, I like started, like, my sexuality. YouTube channel was like,

the first place of that. And that was like when that relationship was kind of at its end. But yeah, a lot of that was also inspired from my own experiences of trying to figure this shit out. And like, let me do some peer education of like what I've learned along the way, right?

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 10:46

And because yeah, backing up, like as you were growing up, like, what were you exposed to in terms of sex education and sexuality, like, what was your socialization there? Because it sounds like, as you were kind of stepping into later adolescence, you were really wanting to provide education to folks and feeling interested in this topic. And recognizing, hey, there's a gap here. So it makes me curious, well, what happened before that?

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 11:06

Yeah, in terms of like sexuality, growing up in Toronto, things were quite inclusive and like growing up in a pro queer and trans household, like my first ever like, babysitting clients that I had, you have when you're like, 13, was some of my parents best friends was like a gay couple, meeting a gay couple who like have a kid also that age is a big positive influence there. My dad's brother is also trans.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 11:35

Yeah, so it sounds like lots of queerness around you was very normalized, and was inclusive and prep celebrated. And then I guess, like, the piece around sex and sexuality. Was that also kind of just part of the conversation too? Or is that something that was kind of kept out of the conversation? Like, what do you remember about just learning about sex as like a younger person?

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 11:55

Yeah, I don't remember getting a lot of sex as a younger person. I think my remember like actual like, sex ed in school is like, my gym teacher just like happening to I have to be at so many different sports events. The week we do sex ed. Oops, I guess I can't teach, get a supply teacher instead. I don't know that was actually the case of what was going on. But I remember like getting slammed down on my desk, like a diagram of like the penis and like to label and I remember that being my sex ed. But I was also like, a big nerd when it comes to like sex and dating and relationships in high school on YouTube, which is just like looking up as much as I can. I feel like that's like a very, like, teenage thing to be like, how do you know when somebody likes you? How do you how do you communicate? The thing is, yeah, I was like, obsessed with sex educators on YouTube, which was, again, kind of like a full circle moment that I'm now in that space of like, giving the education online to people.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 13:07

So cool. Okay, so then after this, this three year relationship, again, at the time, it sounds like

queerness is not necessarily at the forefront of your awareness. It's making me think of and I'm sure we'll get into it, you do a lot of work with compulsory heterosexuality, which I'm curious to hear more about what happened next in your story. And when did queerness kind of start to illuminate itself?

 13:27

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 13:27

Yeah, so after this relationship ended, we had we're gonna do straight hookup life. We're at college. It's really funny, because I kind of think of it now as like fieldwork for like a workshop that I've now created on like, how to navigate hookup culture with care. Yeah, but as my style has always been a nerd about sex. It was very interesting. Yeah, like a fieldwork perspective, or a field research perspective of like, how do we do this? Dating apps? Like, Who are these men? Okay, let's go on a date. Let's see how that goes. That experience was interesting.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 14:10

Right, yeah, you were kind of in hindsight, you can see you're gathering data that was later going to serve your work now. Totally. That's cool. And the other is something about like, any helper of some kind, we often travel through the muck ourselves to gather the data and knowledge and experience to then try to offer it to other folks after so I'm not surprised to hear that was part of your arc too. But cool. Okay. So yeah, so you're dating, you're having these experiences after this relationship. And so it makes me wonder in that experience, was there any experience with women? With femmes? Was there any trans folks you were having experiences with like what was happening there?

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 14:44

Yeah, so I remember the summer like after I graduated undergrad that was around the time I think I like switched did the thing where you switch your settings on dating apps to be like, like, and I matched with somebody who I'd known from the Women and Gender Equity network that I was a part of, because you know, 'yes, all these very hot, cool women and queer people in this space, and my platonic point of view.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 15:17

Right, right.

 15:18

E

Eva Bloom (they/she) 15:18

Yeah, I think I went on, like one date with this person. And I was like, definitely attracted to them, but didn't know how to broach this topic. Because I wasn't fully like, I would tell myself, yeah,

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 15:28

wait, wait, backing up. So like, tell me about the moment before switching the settings on the app to allow for kind what sounds like a different gender. What do you remember? Like, at the time, kind of, how are you conceptualizing that for yourself? Like, oh, okay, I'm having this interest? Like, were you putting any meaning on it at the time? Or were you just like, just kind of, was it a split second impulse decision? Or was it something you thought about? I'm curious about that?

E

Eva Bloom (they/she) 15:28

Hmm. Part of it is because the process of swiping on dating apps, looking for men is terrible. Like there's so many men who are misogynist, and don't like women is just like, so part of it was like, it's gotta be a better way. And you swipe and you're like, all of these women and non binary people are like, full actualized human beings with hobbies, and they're not harassing me. Like, I want to be their actual like, friends. This is so much nicer. But yeah, I think I also had thoughts of like, when I was in that, like, first relationship, I want to have us to ask to have a threesome at some point. Like, I want obviously, have a threesome at some point in my life with a woman like, like I'm really, really strict.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 16:36

Right, right. Yeah. Again, like, it's looking back, we can see the clues. But at the time, that's not Yeah, you were just like, yeah, every straight girls want to do this.

E

Eva Bloom (they/she) 16:46

Yeah. And I think I did also have another question in my undergrad, oh, my gosh, who invited me over to cuddle! This is so funny. If I had one queer roommate that I could explain the situation to, and they would have been like, sweetie, you seem very nervous. And she's asking you to come over and cuddle. I think let's break down what this is right now. So yeah, there was stuff stirring around like noticing like attraction to people who weren't cis men.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 17:17

Did you get to go cuddle? Did it get to happen? What was it like?

E

Eva Bloom (they/she) 17:22

It was really great. It was really great. I like, yeah, it was so nervous. That was really great. So we cuddled, got some snacks, We did eventually hook up later down the line

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 17:42

that's so tender. And it also makes me think about Yeah, I mean, Second Adolescence, this idea of, you know, these tender moments at the beginning of our kind of romantic and sexual experiencing with with people the gender we longed to have those experiences with where we can feel all of those feelings and also like, there's like a, an adolescent nature to like, oh my god, the cuddling or Oh, the holding of the hand, like these experiences that are that are so tender, that aren't super sexualized, but are so powerful. .

 18:09

 18:09

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 18:09

Wow. Okay, so you you change your dating settings on the app, you're starting to have these experiences. What do you think shifted in terms of how you yourself were making sense of your identity?

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 18:32

Mm hmm. So it's so fun to have been talking about. The turning point is when I connected with this one particular girl on like sex blogger, sex educator, Twitter, and I do the straightest thing imaginable, which is to slide into your DMS because of a bikini photo that she posted.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 19:00

Yes.

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 19:02

And I asked her like, can I flirt with you? Yeah, we ended up like she lived in Finland and we ended up sexting and like talking for like months and she ends up being able to come to Toronto for a sexuality conference. We got an Airbnb and I, the night before, went on the LGBTQ support website being like, help!

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 19:37

So you we reach you were chatting with someone from the LGBTQ support line about like, Hey, I'm gonna have this experience and I'm getting nervous

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 19:42

Yeah,

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 19:43

what do you remember that being like, and what kind of support did you get from that? That chat line? That's cool.

 19:47

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 19:47

I remember them being very sweet and just being like, we're here for you like, whatever you mean. Like it sounds like they're gonna go okay, lovely.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 19:59

Yeah, Yeah, you were feeling really nervous.

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 20:02

Yeah, I just remember like, being at my parents place in the guest bed, like just like shaking and like having my sister walk by and be like, are you okay? But I also like was thinking like, maybe platonic gal pals get Airbnb, places together.

 20:22

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 20:28

Interesting. So there was still that thought there of trying to minimize almost like the queerness. And to say no, like, this could also just be this platonic thing. So interesting. How do you make sense of that, that that was going on still for you?

E

Eva Bloom (they/she) 20:45

Part of it was like the messaging that like, around like straight women's sexual fluidity. The idea that like, oh, yeah, it's totally normal. And for straight girls to like, make out and like, even have sex with each other. And that's still like, whatever, which is really gross, misogynistic, a lot of stuff, I think. Yeah, I think that was a big one. I think also, because like, all of our communication with that I had with this girl was like, online. I feel like I didn't have tangible proof in that way. Yeah. No, I think it was also like, at the beginning of my career journey, I think I dealt with a lot of like internalized homophobia, and like, by phobia, where I was, like, didn't feel like I could take up space or like, claim queerness in that way, could you share, because I think that happens for a lot of folks. And I'm curious if you could share more about that particular experience of how, how that presented itself for you, and then how you work through it. Because I think it's too common.



21:44

I think in general, like the patriarchal society, like really shits on and like, devalues Femme people's experience and autonomy. And I think also like, most of the media representation of like lesbians or queer women that I had seen was of Butch people, which is kind of wild, because there's actually like, not a lot of foot representation. Like, we look at like movies. There's a lot of representation. But I felt like yeah, this image of like, what does it mean to be a lesbian or like a queer woman or a queer person? didn't feel like I could fit into that. And I think I felt especially like being in the sexuality field and like being in college, like I felt like minimizing it to myself in that way that like, maybe this is just experimentation. Maybe just like because I'm in this like, permissive inclusive space. That's just what's happening for me. But yeah, connecting with other by phone people online at that time was like, super validating and like finding that community where I'm like, we are queer. Like, this is a valid like, queer experience that like, can also be like celebrated was really huge for me at that time.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 22:59

Totally. Gosh, and I'm thinking about I mentioned a couple of times this idea of compulsory heterosexuality, and I'm thinking about how it probably shows up differently for people who are socialized female. Yeah, I mean, I guess I'm curious, like, how do you either make sense of that that term or kind of see that show up both in kind of your own history and story and maybe another people that you work with? I'm just curious, because I'm seeing that also as a big piece here.

E

Eva Bloom (they/she) 23:23

Totally. Yeah, the unchallenged assumption that straight was my default that I was working with, or like attraction to men was definitely there and this need that like, you need the proof of anything outside of that to be like infallible, because like I had dated Ben in the past slept with men in the past. That was also a thing where I was like, This feels like a body of work here. That even though like the kind of initial essay around like, compulsory heterosexuality was written kind of more specifically about lesbians. I think it does, like impact every person queer or straight, like of any gender and like different ways and yeah, like as a bi person, it definitely felt

more like okay, straightness is, is the assumption adding, or like experiencing queerness as well, and then really, like deeply unlearning that even more as a lesbian to be like, No, like we've allowed for queerness to become part of accepted part of who we are as like a whole. Let's take a real good look at our so called attraction to men since coming out as Bob, have we felt any interest in dating men? Have we seen any men that we want to date? It's been three years. That's interesting data.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 24:37

Right? Okay. Yeah. So was that in your story? That whole dialogue? Because that happened for you?

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 24:41

Yeah.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 24:42

So then what happened on the other side of that when you like, okay, yeah, it's been three years I haven't had this attraction towards these types of people. Yeah, what then happened for you? How did you then interpret that data?

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 24:52

Yeah, I think I Yeah, it was fine connecting with other lesbians and like, friends in my life who were lesbian and being like, what if I gave myself the permission to like, try on that label, Star share and lesbian memes? As I'm doing that, that feels validating and it feels right. I guess also like getting rid of this idea of a binary there too. If you are a lesbian, like, you may never have crushes on any fictional men. Also the idea of like, you can hold this past of like having dated men and still identifying like, BLS, bn, yes, I'm a sucker for women. Two things are true, right. And like, there's so much power and space that gets created when we allow that to occur. And because when two things are true, like, it removes a lot of the shoulds almost and the meaning that like society or other things place onto us, but just because yeah, that was true. And this is true and like neither necessarily have to negate the other they can coexist. And they don't delegitimize my selfhood and my identities now.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 25:57

Yeah. Love that. Love that. Okay, so then what happened at the Airbnb?! I gotta go back!

 26:03

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 26:05
Oh, my gosh, yeah, we gotta finish that story. How many spicy details do you?

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 26:10
I mean, feel free to share as little or as much but I mean, I'm finding myself hoping you had a certain experience with that person after all those nerves.

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 26:19
Yeah, oh my gosh, yeah. First person to ever give me an orgasm. Wow. Yeah. I mean, gosh, like how groundbreaking and like life opening. And like so after years of research, research research and trying to figure out like, Oh, and also these things of like, am I broken? Like, what's wrong with me that this.. but yeah, it was so effortless, like so easy.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 26:42
Wow. Okay, wait. So before that there was this is something wrong with me that I'm not experiencing sex and sexuality in this way that maybe I'm told I should? Okay, so that was like a thing you were navigating beforehand. And then this, this offered you new data? Wow.

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 26:59
Yeah.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 27:00
So what like, what was that? Like? Holy moly.

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 27:06
Like a lot of joy, a lot of tenderness. Yeah. A lot of like, care and ease.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 27:13
Yeah. And then I'm thinking about, like, an experience, and kind of the pre experience of is something wrong with me, why am I not feeling this certain thing, having this experience that was so tender and joyful and all of it and then I'm curious how that then also impacted the way you viewed yourself and your identities. Even just my own, my first experience with the man was, I mean, scary, exciting, all the things, but also, like, there was such a, "Oh, I get it now.

Okay. Ooh, this, this is me." Knowing up here, this is me. But then feeling it now in my body? Like, yes. Okay. There was something there missing or now I'm, I feel more connected to my queerness than I did before. I don't know if that was true for you.

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 27:53

Yeah. So I had had sex with a woman one time before that. And I think in that experience, I was looking for that confirmation. And I didn't get it that time. Because yeah, I didn't feel super connected and even like this person, necessarily. And yeah, and when that experience, like, didn't give that confirmation, I was like, I guess I'm not, but also still want to do it again. Eva, straight women don't want to have sex with women.

 28:21

But yeah, so after this Airbnb experience is very interesting. I was still like, even that did not like shake me internally to be like, you're queer. And like, had another like, experience at that conference. That was clear. But it wasn't until the last like keynote of the conference, where I realized that like, it was going to be over. And I like realized that this girl was going to go home to Finland, and I didn't know when I was going to see her again. And I got this like, pit in like, the bottom of my stomach of like, like, I'm gonna miss her. And I'm like, care about her so much. And like, that was the moment where I was like, could no longer deny queerness and I was like, you have romantic feelings for this girl. And yeah, I like took the subway home after the conference. And my mom said, today, anything interesting happened this weekend. And that's when I came out to her. My sister at the table. I was like this little there's this girl. This is what's up.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 29:26

Wow, yeah what was that conversation like?

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 29:28

It was interesting. My sister like, hugged me actually, like, I love you like, yeah, and my mom. Just kind of like looked at the table. And I think like got up and left. That's what I remember.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 29:42

Oh, huh. Yeah, yeah, I guess I'm finding myself as a listener. Almost surprised by that because it sounded like there was a lot of queer affirming vibes growing up and every parent has their own story and stuff. Wow, was that surprising or what was it gosh, I mean, also like, what was that like for you?

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 30:01

It was really hard. Yeah, I remember her saying something like, I thought I would have known. And I was like, babe, I've only put it together literally five minutes before I told you. You can give yourself some slack here. But it's been a journey. My parents have never been like, outright like, homophobic towards me. But it definitely hasn't been like 100% comfort and like celebration. They're working on it, it is a journey.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 30:35

Yeah, I mean, totally. I'm thinking about in this conversation and think about like two concepts of we talk about compulsory heterosexuality, but also like anti queerness. And like, yes, there's some overlap, but also some differences there. And I'm curious if like, do you recognize anti queerness showing up in your story, at least what you were exposed to growing up? Do you even label that reaction as anti queerness? Because so far and hearing your story, I've been thinking, Oh, that's interesting. Like how just seeing the impact that compulsory heterosexuality can have almost on a similar level as anti queerness in blocking people from their true selves. And wondering if for you, it's felt like yeah, one or more than the other or both. Yeah. How that shown up in your own journey of unlearning?

E

Eva Bloom (they/she) 31:20

Yeah, I can guess that maybe my parents I think in the beginning had the maybe the ideas that I have myself like, Oh, my kid is on a sexuality path, their university, their fam thereby like, what does that even mean? Like? Yeah, I think I definitely internalized a lot of those messages. And up until like, this past year, really like stepping into this idea that like, I can be my full self and like this idea of like making being gay or personality that there's no like, too much Ness when it comes to being queer in my work in my life.



32:02

Yeah, I definitely like internalized some anti premise, whether that came from your parents, or like other places in my life.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 32:11

Yeah, that's true for all of us, in some form, totally. And like, that becomes the work of undoing and unlearning. And like, as you're speaking to sounds like in this last year, in particular, creating space to like, bring all of yourself to the table. And there's so much healing that happens. It's so liberating. And and for some folks, there's there's certain resistance to doing that. And perhaps that was part of your story. But yeah, I'm just finding myself just like feeling a lot of empathy, both in my own experience, like projecting that onto your experience. And like, I think there was some overlap, but also just like for you having to navigate those situations and conversations and all of us. It's tricky. It's so tricky. And so in this latter part of your story of taking up more space in your queerness of learning more about that, but then also, it seems like it also had a direct impact on the work you were doing in sex education, like curious if you get to walk me through that journey.

E

Eva Bloom (they/she) 33:04

Yeah. After we did the have realization, I'm romantically attracted to this girl. Okay, we're clear, immediately come up to my parents and my sister about a week after I came out publicly, like in my work on YouTube at this time. So pretty quick turnaround time. And yeah, from there like, even though I don't think I talked so much in like, first person about my experiences, always. My sex ed work has always been like, largely influenced by where I'm at, in my own journey and the things I'm working about and thinking about. So yeah, very naturally, like I started to create more as when I was added finance by at the time like a lot of very, like, by affirming content for people and like, more queer sex ed in general. Yeah. And then when I went on the journey of like, coming out again, as a lesbian in like, the past year, it came out again, as non binary and the lesbian. I met my now best friend, like, around that time, and a month later, we launched our like, member like Club, which is called the Comp-Het support club.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 34:22

Yeah, yeah. Wait, so tell me tell me about Tell me about it.

E

Eva Bloom (they/she) 34:27

Yeah. Yeah, so the Comp Het support club is very much informed by my friend Marley and I's like experience of meeting each other fellow pandemic lesbians like who've gone on a similar journey about learning calm pet, meeting each other and like I describe it sometimes is like, not realizing like you're in a desert and like getting that first sip of water and being like, oh my god, like desperately like needing less like for so long. And the love and affirmation of like finding people who are on a similar journey. And yeah, as being both like sex educators and facilitators, we were like, if this is something that we needed, it's probably something that other people need to.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 35:14

Yeah. And what has it been like putting this out in the world? And just for folks listening Comp-Het stands for compulsory heterosexuality. So yeah, what has it been like putting this out in the world? And what has the response been like? It's been really beautiful. Yeah, we have a discord. We do like monthly, like zoom community calls. We have like people from all over the world. Come on. And yeah, really center queer joy. And so many things I love about it. I love whenever we get somebody who it's their first time on the Zoom call, seeing them at the beginning, be like, feel very nervous and like hesitant. And then by the end of the call, we like end every call the little dance party because Riley and I both feel like dance is a big part of our queer joy and like self expression. So like seeing people get to the end of the call and like, are totally transformed. And that's so beautiful. And also like having the discord and people will write introductions when they come into this space. And yeah, so many people will tell a very similar story of like, over the pandemic, like, looked around and was like, Holy fuck, like, this is, this is not my authentic life and like taking steps towards that. And yeah, people coming on and being like, I don't know, if anybody's had that experience. And I've really on the Discovery, like, we have you found the right place like you're not alone! Gosh, I mean, yeah, that really was like, the pandemic, of course, was on one hand is so challenging for so many folks, for so many

different reasons. But on the other hand, a lot of people had this experience of as things kind of shut down or slowed down, there's a lot more focus inward, a lot more space to be curious and to ask questions, and maybe ask harder questions we haven't asked ourselves before, like, it doesn't surprise me to hear how many people you have found to have had that same experience of finding their queerness within the pandemic because again, those so painful when things shut down that space got created to dive deeper inward. Wow, that's really special.

E

Eva Bloom (they/she) 37:25

Yeah, and I think I would be curious to see whether it's been like similar for maybe you for like, gay men, but I know for a lot of lesbians that I've talked to like, tick tock has, like, genuinely been hugely impactful. Oh, interesting. Oh, cool. Like as in they've, they've found just people on Tik Tok who are talking about their experience. And yeah, there's, there's a meme. Like, it's the experience is so common that there's kind of a meme that like, oh, it took me 30 years to realize I was gay. The Tick Tock algorithm found out in 15 minutes.



38:02

But like people, yeah, in the pandemic, not having all these external distractions, looking at her going on Tik Tok. And the algorithm like, being like here is more homonormative queer Joy content. And this community for people do engage in queer content with some anonymity to find, like, make queer community and connection and like, I don't know, like different audios, like different trends like that you could participate in and feel like you're a part of something from like, anywhere in the world. Really, for me, like the framing of there being like, cool, hot, caring lesbians, like who are like me, I can be lesbian like that. It's very real.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 38:51

That's cool. Okay. Yeah, I mean, I know Tik Tok is a mixed bag, but go Tik Tok, and this way, that's fantastic.

E

Eva Bloom (they/she) 38:57

I know!

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 38:58

It is so interesting. Like the algorithms of social media, like, I often think about, like for many people, queerness can exist still in our unconscious mind. And like, those algorithms can almost be a way that our unconscious gets like, is able to let itself out and then help shift into the conscious mind. We only see oh, wow, there's only these types of videos coming at me that's communicating something. I'm influencing this algorithm. This is coming from me. So that's

just, it's cool that that has become a tool. It's like a mirror in a sense, like, This is who you are. And then it becomes a tool to feel more okay about that and feel more connected and a sense of belonging with other people who are navigating the same thing. Cool.

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 39:35

Yeah, yeah. Part of that, too, is like the lesbian master doc feel like maybe you've heard of

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 39:46

no, tell me.

E Eva Bloom (they/she) 39:47

Oh, my God. Yes. This person. I don't actually know who she is. This queer woman created a Google doc called the lesbian master doc, which really talks about a science community

 40:00

Their knowledge translator broke down the idea of compulsory heterosexuality in very plain speak, like walked people through like, how do you feel? Thinking about your life married to a man? Like how's it feel in your body? How do you feel? Imagine your life married to a woman. It honestly might be like 25 pages this like Xirus document Yeah, got like shared quite widely on Tik Tok and like, introduced a large group of people to the idea of content as well. Well, okay, we're gonna have to link to that. That's great. That's fantastic. Well, either I'm looking at the time. I know, I gotta get to soon. I don't want to there's like so many more places we could go. Sure. Seriously, but okay, I guess like for this conversation? Was there anything we didn't get to? That felt like, yeah, I really wanted to be a part of this particular conversation. Yeah. As an academic or like a science communicator, like having language to put to an experience is very powerful. And like, even this like language of like a pandemic, lesbian. People sharing going on that on that journey with each other. Yeah, I think can especially for people who are like late bloomers feeling like, is it too late to do this? Like, am I alone in this feeling of like, oh, no, like, there's a word. And there's other people who have like, gone on this journey, like, very powerful. But

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 41:23

yeah, and I think that's where there's a lot of overlap, too. And our work and this idea of second adolescence, like, it shows up a lot and the healing work, you're kind of guiding people through as well, of just getting normalizing kind of the timeline of things, normalize the experience of things. Anything else to say that kind of that I guess, this idea of second adolescence, like whenever in your story, you came across it like, wow, how did it replan for you and your own experience?

E

Eva Bloom (they/she) 41:50

Yeah, I feel like we're kind of at the point of like, where am I at now, which it does feel like second adolescence now, even though in some ways, like, I did get to engage in queer community, like in high school, and in university in some ways, spending a lot of time being queer in the pandemic, like, I can count on one hand, the number of times I've been to, like, a queer club, or like a queer dance party.



42:16

Or like going on, like queer dates, or yeah, all of that stuff. Like, even if I did some of it under like a by woman labor, like it feels very different. And like, more vulnerable more. Me all of that stuff, like since coming out again. Yeah.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 42:39

Yeah, well, again, I could talk your ear off, but I gotta let you go. But I guess if folks wanted to learn more about you and the work you're doing, and also hear about all the different offerings you have, like, what's the best place to send them and anything else you want to share about kind of what you're up to now?

E

Eva Bloom (they/she) 42:54

Yeah, so if folks want to connect with me, Instagram is probably the best place I'm at @whatsmybodydoing. The club membership for the fuck comp-het support club is ongoing, open to new members always. But yeah, I do a lot of queer sex ed on my Instagram and on tick tock just the same handle @whatsmy. I run a like three months long sex ed program, which is really about if you feel like you really have these, like shoulds in your brain about what your sex life should be. And you feel very stressed about like, Am I doing things the right way, and you feel like things aren't working for you. That's really what the program is about, and like giving you a lot of space to connect with your own relationship to pleasure. There's a waitlist for that, but I we're gonna start enrolling in January. And I just did a sex ed for late bloomers masterclass, which was super duper fun. Yeah, talking about how do you have queer sex?

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 43:54

Right. I mean, this is this is such an important resource. Yeah, there's not a lot of spaces who are like directly teaching this and like teaching this in a way that's like, sensitive to shame getting in the way like removing that and like helping people just find more connection to themselves in the sexuality cool. Oh, I'm so I mean, first off, it's feeling so much gratitude just for you coming on and opening up your own story and being so generous with it and letting us all in. But then I'm also absolutely feeling so grateful for the resource and gifts you're offering to our greater community, very powerful work you're doing and so important. And I can hear how in your story, like so much of your own healing has, like informed and been a part of your work. And also, I'm sure your work is also added to your own healing and liberation, like how cool and so I just feel so appreciative of you and the work you're doing in the world. So cool.

E

Eva Bloom (they/she) 45:00

Thank you so much, Adam, for creating such a beautiful and warm space to have this conversation and for this podcast and like your page in general too for being a support for people. That's it means a lot

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 45:12

thanks for joining us for today's conversation. Feel free to head on over to secondadolescencepod.com for show notes and more. And you can connect further by following the show on Instagram at [@secondadolescence pod](https://www.instagram.com/secondadolescencepod). If you're interested in being a future guest on the show and you want to come on and share about your own second adolescence, visit [secondadolescence pod.com/be A guest](https://secondadolescencepod.com/be-a-guest) and you can submit your interest there. Alright, that's it for me for now, whether it's morning, afternoon, night, wherever we're finding you in your day, go on out there and keep doing things that would make younger you absolutely thrilled. That is what it's all about. All right. Take good care.