



Barnard Student Life

NATIONAL COMING OUT DAY: LETTERS FOR BARNARD ARCHIVES

In partnership with the Barnard Archives, Barnard Student Life is holding a tabling session where students may (anonymously) write a letter to themselves or a future reader.

**First Floor Diana Center
October 11, 2016
12:00 - 2:00 PM**

Tuesday, October 11, 2016

Dear Future Barnard Student,

I am writing to you as a queer, lesbian Chinese-American (woman/non-binary person). Today is National Coming Out Day and I am excited to share this moment with you, as it means that I can imagine a queer and LGBT futurity. I am out to my family and friends in addition to co-workers and classmates. I do wonder if the practice of coming out of "the closet" will still be relevant when you read this. Regardless, my advice will most likely be timeless, haha!

For me, coming out to my family looked like my mother asking me if I was gay after I decided to intern at GLAAD, an LGBT advocacy organization. I was honest, probably not ready, but I just wanted her suspicions to end so I said "yes." She got really mad, didn't believe me, and told me that I might just be confused. She even asked if I was claiming the gay identity because I was a gender studies major! It took me a long time to realize that she wasn't so much upset with me, but rather at the prejudices she thought I would have to overcome, such as homophobia, in addition to being an Asian woman. Being out has been very important to me because while it was difficult emotionally, I have been able to be more expressive and a resource to people who are still not out. I recognize that for some of you, being out can be dangerous, so I advise you to recognize if you can internally claim being LGBTQA. It definitely helped me to record my feelings by writing and looking at my process. I hope that you can find peace and love.

Coming out is not something that happens once, or twice, in life, but instead every year, month, week and day. Coming out is not a speech to one person, but living your truth daily. Living, breathing, existing is my coming out.

In the traditional sense, I came out exactly 4 years ago today. I sat in my guidance counselor's office, as my mother cried and then yelled and then left. No, it was not 'ideal', but it happened. Either way, saying words or not does not change who am I am, who I have become in the time since.

Last night, I looked at photos of myself from 4 years ago. The man I am today was a dream to the girl I was forced to be then. The beard on my face, the voice in my throat, it all is hard-earned and so valued because of it. I guess all we can really hope from our future is that our now would be proud of them. Coming out is hearing let myself become this man.

Having this day forced me to say words years ago, that I was not ready to say. I would have waited, but I am not regretful of the life I have lived since.

My first tattoo is across my chest and says $\lambda\sigma\lambda \epsilon\delta\omega \lambda\sigma\lambda$, Sindar for 'I am that I am', and that is coming out, living out that idea everyday.

Dearest person,

Please remember your self-worth.

You are literal magic.

You are a star, lighting the way.

You are a goddess, a god, a deity, a
person who is worthy of worship
and love.

You are you.

You are love.

Recite this anthem
of self-love and
acceptance
every day.

To Whom It May Concern,

I only came out to my parents and the world fairly recently, and with relatively little fanfare. The people who truly cared about me didn't make a huge deal about it, and it was mostly a relief to not have to hide this aspect of myself anymore.

The point is — and I know everyone's situation is different — coming out doesn't always have to be this super scary, life-changing ordeal. It thankfully wasn't for me, and although my father still thinks it's "weird", I know he'll come around and hopefully accept me eventually.

You'll be fine. And at Barnard, you'll have plenty of people eager to support you regardless of your situation.

Best Wishes,

J.P. O

Hey Habibi/Habibiti,

I just wanted to let you

know that you can be religious

and queer; you can believe in

prophet Muhammad (SAW) and

love your ~~own~~ any gender. And that's

okay; you are a wonderful person

and no matter how intersectional you

are there's always a community

here for you. I love you. I will be

here for you. — Maymouna

Dear person who is reading this,



If you don't know how you identify, that's ok. You shouldn't feel like you have to label yourself or put yourself in a box. If you want to, go for it. Basically, I think it should all be about "you do you." If you are an ally, you shouldn't care how your friends identify, but you should know that it's a huge part of who they are, and you need to accept that. Just be kind, respectful, and open-minded. All will be well. You are here, you are loved, you are brave, you are cared for, and you ~~are~~ ~~are~~ deserve to be happy. Surround yourself with people who make you feel like that.



All the love,

A Barnard Student



10-11-66

Dear Barnard Student,

I hope this letter finds you well whether you are a current student, alum, or student of any kind. I hope that you know that there are people that will and do love and accept you. You

are a beautiful person that deserves to live authentically as yourself.

Know there are people here to support you.

Know that your bravery, honesty, and courage today is something positive for yourself and someone in need.

Thank you for being you and bringing beauty to the world!

Best,

Anne Kelly

coming out is
a project. sometimes
it is walked, others
it would forward.
it would in your
hand social HIA
and identity
and identity
always your own,
and sometimes that
and sometimes that
and sometimes that

Hey,

I want to tell you that I am a bi-sexual Barnard student and I have so comfortable, and even encouraged about my sexuality. Have no fear because you're beautiful no matter what!

October 11, 2016

Hello!

Love yourself for yourself.

Thank you for being you

and know that you are

loved. What you're feeling is

important & valid, so be patient

and kind to yourself.

All the love & hugs in the
world,

(XO) A Barnard Senior