

YouTube vlogger talks sex positivity

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Minji Kong/THE REVIEW

The key to taking down sexual assault in Youtuber Laci Green's terms is simple: consent.

BY SEASON COOPER
SENIOR REPORTER

One in four female students and one in six male students are sexually violated while earning their degree.

Green, a YouTube personality and sex educator visited campus for a candid conversation on rape culture. This is one of many startling statistics Green shared about sexual violence on Thursday evening in Mitchell Hall.

Organized by the Special Interest Greek Council (SIGC), students were invited to participate in the lecture through activities that took an in-depth look at their attitudes and responses to sexual violence. The event is part of a series planned for the campus "kNOw More" campaign, and more advocates and educators are scheduled to appear throughout April for Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month.

Green began her Sex Plus series on her YouTube channel in 2008 while she was a student at University of California, Berkeley. Her channel currently has over one million subscribers. Green hopes to spread "sex positivity" and end sexual violence by speaking at universities around the country.

Green pinpointed four categories that allow rape culture to persist: toleration, minimization, instances of victim blaming and gender roles.

"These are things that we have to see and pay attention to in order to really be able to address this problem," Green said.

Senior Alexis Trench, president of SIGC, decided to invite Green to campus because of the "frustration" she felt following former Breitbart editor Milo Yiannopoulos' visit to campus last fall. Trench said denying that rape culture exists is part of the problem.

"There was a lot of conversation saying rape culture was non-existent and this is something I felt very passionate about," Trench said. "I wanted to provide an educational experience for people to draw their own conclusions."

Green shared alarming figures about sexual violence by highlighting public cases and instances in popular culture. According to Green, data about sexual assault is not always accurate because of the lack of reporting. In addition, she said the stigmas surrounding rape worsen the problem.

According to the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN), college-age adults are at higher risk for sexual violence in comparison to other age groups. Green also pointed out that transgender women and women of color statistically experience sexual violence in proportionally higher numbers. By dissecting the trends that uphold sexual assault, Green emphasized that society no longer make “excuses” when it comes to sexual violence.

The key to taking down sexual assault in Green’s terms is simple: consent.

“Consent is normal — not like a weird thing, not a word people have never heard before — just a normal part of sex,” Green said. “We have to use our words to make sure that things are clear, people should note that it is reversible and you can change your mind.”

For the students who attended the event, the message of consent resonated, especially in the context of Greek life. Junior Joshua Clarke said students need to be “equipped” to handle these situations.

“I think it’s a really important conversation to have on a campus, where so many people are involved in Greek life, to know that rape culture exists and how to combat it,” Clarke said. “Because if you get this information out to everyone, people will be equipped to combat it.”

Green encourages students not to be bystanders and to most importantly have conversations with friends and family members.

“You have a very powerful voice,” Green said. “Start a conversation in your community.”

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