On October 30th, we saw the Boston Red Sox take home a final win against in the Cardinals in the 2013 MLB World Series. After their first Championship victory at Fenway since 1918, baseball was on my mind, as I am sure it was on the minds of many other students. Therefore, the Health and Wellness Educators on campus would like to draw some attention to your minds about baseball, and, about sex.

This year, the HAWEs have put together a campaign focusing on sexual activity and the way it is perceived on college campuses. This past summer, Al Vernacchio delivered an insightful TED talk on the power of the baseball metaphor as it pertains to sex. In his talk, *Sex Needs a New Metaphor*, Vernacchio offers the idea that the baseball metaphor, while it is the dominant cultural metaphor for sexual activity in America, is incredibly problematic.

In this model, stages of sexual activity are referred to as bases: first base, second base, and third base. As we grow up and experiment with sexual activity, we are taught to progress through these stages. Although definitions of each stage may vary, the main point to draw from them is that no one really has the option of *staying* at a base. Because, like in baseball, we must round the bases in order to ultimately score a ‘homerun.’ But this isn’t the only sex metaphor we draw from baseball. You can be a pitcher or a catcher, or if you are unable to ‘score’ you ‘strike out’ instead. If you are bisexual, you may be referred to as a “switch-hitter,” and if you are gay or lesbian, then you ‘play for the other team.’ A penis can be referred to as a ‘bat,’ and a condom is a ‘catcher’s mitt’ or a ‘glove.’ It is overwhelmingly obvious that baseball sets a metaphor for sex, and that this model is sexist, heterosexist, and goal-oriented.

Vernacchio proposes an alternative to the baseball metaphor: pizza. Who doesn’t like pizza? Let’s examine playing baseball verses eating pizza. When do you play baseball? Only during baseball season! But not everyone has the skill set to play, and if you do, you can’t decide when you play baseball. Can you imagine Pedroia telling John Farrell that he didn’t *feel* like playing in game 6? No. In baseball, you play when you **have to** which serves as an unsuccessful metaphor for sex. You should have sex when both partners want to have sex. Not because your roommate is away or because you have time between classes. This idea is conveyed in the pizza model. You have pizza *when you communicate with your partner and choose* to have pizza: when you are both hungry and craving pizza.

What about the expected outcome of baseball? You play to win. If this corresponds to sex, then there is a winner and a loser: two people taking competitive roles. With pizza, there is no winner. When you sit down to have pizza with someone, you decide the kind of pizza you both like. You can go half and half, or decide to try one kind of pizza one night, and another kind the next night. The question you ask each other after is: “are you satisfied?” The whole premise behind the pizza model is that you, as an individual, get to communicate with your partner about when and what you want.

The HAWEs have decided to take Vernacchio’s advice and promote this new model for sex around campus. Look for our posters, and come to our fun and interactive workshop, This is HAWE Do It: Sex, December 3rd in GHH G-01, with free pizza of course!