Equality and the right to education: let’s talk about sex education
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in Human Rights and Equality in Education: Comparative Perspectives on the Right to Education for Minorities and Disadvantaged Groups

This chapter addresses the challenges girls face in accessing human rights-based sex education. Sex education sharply brings into focus the discriminatory gender norms that influence and undermine a girl's right to education and the accountability challenges that are becoming increasingly pervasive throughout all of education. The Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the prominent legal instrument on women's rights, offers new ways of conceptualising and addressing these challenges. There are specific obligations referring to sex education in the treaty and most importantly there is a positive obligation on the state to provide sex education to fulfil the fundamental rights of girls and women. Indeed, sex education is a necessary measure to ensure girls and women's right to life, health, education, gender equality, and freedom from violence.

“Men are Microwaves, Women are Crock-Pots”: Gender Roles in AOUME and CSE
Nancy Kendall

This chapter examines the gender roles and norms promulgated in the Abstinence Only Until Marriage education (AOUME) and Comprehensive Sexuality education (CSE) programs. AOUME models draw on a gender
ideology that is backed by millennia of religious and social practice. This neotraditionalist model allows AOUM educators to acknowledge and address the effects of socially differentiated gender norms on students' lives, and as such powerfully connects with the gender inequity experiences of teachers, students, and parents. On the other hand, the CSE curricula and programs are largely silent about the realities of gender norms and practices in the United States, attempting instead to create universal human equality by silencing talk about gender. They are thus often out of synch with teachers', students', and parents' lived experiences of gender differences and inequities.