Recently, I have started to listen to the song “crack baby” by mitski over and over. As she sings about the protagonist constantly searching for something: an unnamed object that neither the narrator nor the protagonist can place, but the protagonist desires desperately. Throughout the song, mitski relates the protagonist to a “crack baby,” which is a term used to describe the children of mothers that smoked crack cocaine while pregnant, and more important it is a term that describes the belief that these children will come out of the womb addicted to crack, but it is something they can never obtain. As I listen to this song more and more, I can’t help but wonder why it speaks to me as much as it does, because I am not a “crack baby.” However, like a “crack baby,” I find myself continuously searching for something just out of my grasp, and only recently have I been able to identify what exactly that thing is. I came out of the closet relatively early compared to the other people I know. When I came out of the closet I felt so alone and isolated, not knowing anymore around me that was going through the same thing. Although I tried to surround myself with queer-related media in TV shows and books, it just wasn’t enough. I was constantly searching for something, not acceptance, but to feel like I belong and that other people were going through the same thing. Even as I went into high school and met more queer people, I still felt that feeling of solitude, because none of them understood what it was like to come out in a space that maybe was not the most receptive to that. They of course struggled too, but I never felt like they truly understood just how alone I felt, because even though I was surrounded by people who knew what it was like to be different in that way, it was just not enough to make me feel included. Everyone was getting into relationships and having all of these fun “teen” experiences, and I was left by myself, held back by the fact that there was simply no one that was like me with whom I could enjoy my teenage years. The thing that ended my search was not a person, but rather me realizing that I do not need to be like anyone else or even have other people that relate to me to be happy. I am who I am, and that is enough for me. I am no longer the crack baby that Mitski sang about, I know what I want and I am not searching for it, because I realized that I will never find anyone that completely understands me, and that is okay. I always saw tv shows and movies where people live the “perfect” teen life, and it has always been so hard to see that and know that because I’m not straight, I’ll never know what that’s like. Even though I am not hooking up with random people, or falling in love, or seeing relationships that represent me in movies, I can still find ways to enjoy my life. I don’t need a coming of age story to be satisfied with my life, because ultimately, my teenage years are my own and that is what makes them so special. Although it took me much longer than it should have, I finally realized that I can feel complete and happy without needing to fit in and be like everyone else, because conformity is boring. In the end, what I was really searching for the whole time was self acceptance and happiness, and it took me realizing that what I thought I was searching for wouldn’t make me happy for me to finally find the happiness I desired. I realized that I do not need other people to enjoy being a teenager and be happy, I just need to be happy with myself.