

PEOPLE ARE MYTH-TAKEN ON TRANSGENDER ISSUES

▶ staff writer elizabeth panter

Imagine you're on Netflix and you decide to binge-watch *Glee*. While watching the show, you are probably concentrated on the crazy drama or awesome performances instead of political progression. But let's just say you focus on the latter. What contrasts *Glee* from a television show in the 1960s? LGBT+ characters, and lots of them. Homophobia in America is slowly decreasing, with younger generations becoming more accepting towards sexualities and genders, aside from heterosexuality and cisgender. Still, many Americans see the LGBT+ community as a foreign notion: something millennials invented with to feel unique. Multiple sexualities and genders have existed long before today's age; but now that they are welcomed instead of despised, more people feel comfortable revealing this truth about themselves. A Gallup poll agrees, finding the percentage of LGBT+ Americans was 7.3 percent in 2016, having risen from 2012's 5.8 percent. Countless myths concerning the LGBT+ community are targeted on the trans community. These myths are harmful and degrading towards the trans community, and need to be confronted. While not all are mentioned, here are some of the most infamous myths.

MYTH #1

The Only Kind of Trans People are Men and Women

Not all trans people follow binary genders. There are multiple types of gender identity; but some are as follows: Non-binary people, also known as genderqueer, do not identify as any gender; typically using they/them pronouns, but not always. Agender is another term for not associating with any gender, which some non-binary people choose to use. Genderfluid people shift between what gender they associate as, some-times a woman but later a man, both or neither. Not all genderfluid people are the same, so ask for someone's preferred pronouns. Bi or tri-gender means a person identify as two or three genders. One of those genders might be non-binary, but it all depends on the person.

MYTH #2

Trans people are mentally ill.

Gender dysphoria is not a mental illness. Gender dysphoria is a diagnosis that allows transgender individuals to receive treatment for their experience of gender incongruence. Some trans people cannot come out due to safety reasons, and thus cannot be officially diagnosed, yet they still might feel gender incongruence. Gender incongruence is when people's genders do not match biological sexes, resulting in unease and embarrassment. Trans people receive discrimination which often results in mental disorders such as anxiety and depression. Though not everyone agrees with the term "dysphoria."

"I personally do not believe 'gender incongruence' should be categorized as a 'dysphoria' or mental illness," Upper School Guidance Counselor Lauren Powell said. "Transgender people sadly suffered from social and emotional stigma that can impact them at every level." The amount of gender congruence a trans person experiences varies on the individual.

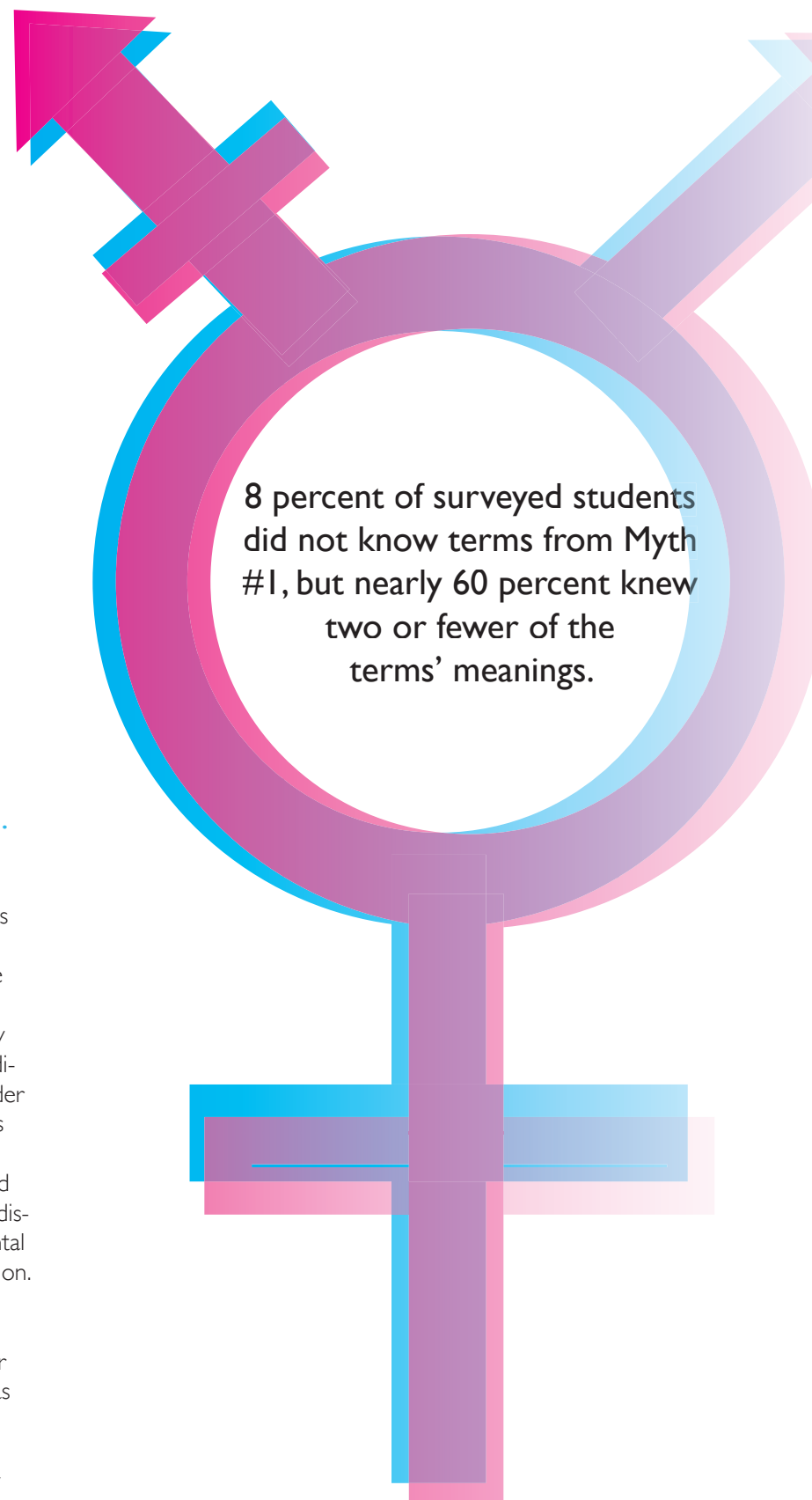
The LGBT+ community suffers from much abhorrence and hatred, with a lot of it coming from sheer ignorance. Would these myths seize to exist if the government stepped up to help these people with education?

"These myths are too deeply rooted to be corrected just in schools," SA Speech and Debate teacher Jharick Shields said. "Teaching awareness and acceptance of the identity spectrum would certainly help but change will be slow. Parents, religious organizations, social influences, and the media will take a long time to adopt inclusive attitudes about these subjects."

Communities, especially including students, should educate on these topics and issues so less ignorance would exist. If people were made more aware from a younger age, less hatred and more acceptance would be seen.

Junior Patrick Marcus said, "I feel like when people are more educated they're less prejudiced against it. A lot of times we have the pre-conceived notion of gay people being, you know, flamboyant and only wearing rainbows, when in reality they're just normal human beings."

No matter what your views are on who LGBT+ people are, at the end of the day, they're here and are not going anywhere. Everyone needs to embrace their differences and band together as a country, instead of letting hate separate us. Recall the 1960s Civil Rights Movement. Those racists let fear and detestation divide the country from other human beings. LGBT+ people are different from heterosexual cisgender people, but why should that divide a country? America has been loathing of differences for centuries, and it is time to make America a loving country.



MYTH #3

Transgender People Are Lying to Themselves:

Transgender people are people who don't identify as their biological sex, whereas the majority of people are cisgender, which means they agree with their biological sex. Many cisgender people do not understand why someone who is born a girl is truly a boy. This thinking comes heavily from the idea that genders only have one specific genitalia. But genitalia does not determine your gender.

"A child's parents and environment are more likely to influence their gender expression than the body parts they were born with," Grinberg and Stewart said. If a cisgender male is in a car wreck and must have his genitalia removed, would he still identify as a man, or is he not a man simply because of his lack of genitalia? No matter what your genitalia is, the only person who can determine your gender is you.

MYTH #4

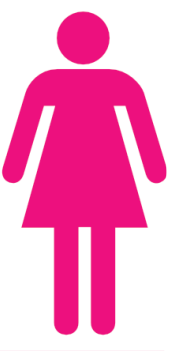
Trans People Are Dangerous in Public Bathrooms

People are under the impression that trans people would assault innocent victims if they were allowed to use the bathroom of the gender they identify as.

A CNN article by Emanuella Grinberg and Dani Stewart states there has been no evidence of assaults caused by trans people using their true gender's bathroom (as opposed to their biological sex bathroom). "[T] here is a lot of anxiety associated with this issue, but it seems to be based on fear rather than facts," Amy Sneirson, Executive Director of Maine Human Rights Commission said. Maine has protected gender identity in its laws for over a decade, with no bathroom crime mentioning a trans assaulter.



THE EXPULSION OF TRANSGENDER PEOPLE FROM THE MILITARY



Yet Another Blow to the Trans Community

▶ staff writer cole morse

Please be advised that the United States Government will not accept or allow Transgender individuals to serve in any capacity in the U.S. Military. Our military must be focused on decisive and overwhelming victory and cannot be burdened with the tremendous medical costs and disruption that transgender in the military would entail.

▶ PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP

This statement is the irrational, outrageous, and unprovoked way in which the President of the United States informed America of the upcoming ban of transgender people in the military. This ban, introduced via Twitter, will severely affect the lives of thousands of current and potential transgender members.

The President is claiming that "tremendous medical costs" are the cause of this ban; however, it is clear that this is simply a transphobic action disguised as a patriotic sacrifice. According to the CBS News article, "The Pentagon Spends a lot of Money on Viagra," in 2014 alone, the Department of Defense spent around \$126 million dollars on Viagra and other medicines meant to treat erectile dysfunction. As both of these prescriptions are not only unnecessary, but extremely costly, it is evident that the government is prioritizing people whom it is most willing to accept: the average man. A study commissioned by the Department of Defense estimated the medical costs for transgender peoples in the military to be between \$2.4 and \$8.4 million annually. The costs of Viagra and other erectile dysfunction treatments, when compared to the costs of matters such as hormones and surgeries, are at least fifteen times more expensive. If it wasn't clear whether Trump supports the trans community during previous debacles regarding transgender peoples, it should be abundantly

clear now. The medical costs of such non-necessities that only assist the average middle aged man are being placed above the medical necessities that would alter transgender people's lives for the better.

In 2016 it was announced that transgender peoples were allowed to serve, openly, within the military. According to The New York Times article, "Military Transgender Ban to Begin Within 6 Months, Memo Says," since 2016, there are around 6,600 active-duty members and up to 15,000 Reserve members that are transgender. The ban, set to be taken into effect on March 23 of 2018, will not only forbid potential transgender members from serving, but will cut funds for reassignment surgeries and other medical treatments for active-duty members. This ban will destroy the work done by the LGBT community that fought for a plan, approved under Obama and nearly implemented, that would have allowed openly transgender troops to join the military.

As Senior Garrison Wade said, "Providing hormones to transgender people and helping them doesn't devalue their service to America. It shouldn't matter if they're transgender or not. People are scared of what they don't know and a lot of people aren't educated on the trans community."

Defense Secretary James Mattis claims that the current policy regarding pre-ban members will remain unchanged until further notice; however, it has been implied that change is likely to occur. According to CBS News Article, "Troops, Veterans React to Trump's Transgender Ban in Military," those serving in the military are currently in a state of unrest. They are angry and upset, as they should be. Rights that the trans community has been fighting years for were just in sight, but were quickly ripped away by the transphobic and unaccepting just months after Trump's inauguration. Coincidence? The future of active-duty trans individuals rests largely in the hands

of those that are close-minded and apathetic.

Within the St. Andrew's community, it appears there are many socially aware students observant of injustice being forced upon the transgender community.

"I feel that everyone should be who they want to be and that there shouldn't be any judgement on it," Sophomore Emerson Boone said.

How is it that in the year of 2017, the rights of any group of peoples are still being questioned, denied, and repressed. Constantly seen on the news and in the papers, the United States is being pushed into divisive social statuses. Whether it is race, religion, heritage, nationality, sexuality, or gender; the suppression of each group is prominent. Why are people still judged on characteristics that they, not only, cannot change, but should be proud of? No one can change the color of his or her skin, heritage, nationality, or the religion, sexuality, or gender they identify with. Transgender people should not feel the need to conform in order to feel safe, accepted, and proud of who they are. According to the Human Rights Campaign, 32 of the 50 states in the U.S. do not have laws prohibiting firing transgender people for being transgender. Under no circumstance is it acceptable to fire anyone for his or her gender; yet many states do not feel the need to protect those susceptible to this discrimination by creating laws to protect them. The trans community has suffered innumerable injustices and never-ending prejudice. Despite whatever situation faces the trans community, with the support of those within the community, the LGBT community as a whole, and allies, people will continue to fight for transgender rights.

LET'S GET QUIZZICAL

▶ opinion editor evan bowman

Zap goes the sound of the buzzer; only a certain number of seconds to answer the question correctly, this is what separates the intellectuals from the geniuses. Welcome to Quiz Bowl.

This past week SA Quiz Bowl traveled south down I-55 to New Orleans for their inaugural tournament of the season. With a new team, no one really expected what the outcome may be.

Last year's team was by far the best team St. Andrew's has ever had," Sponsor Sarah Douglass said. "This year we only returned Charley, which means we had many spots to fill and weren't quite sure who would fill them."

This past week's team consisted of a quartet of Charley Hutchinson, Zach Bobbitt, Satwik Pani, and Henry Sanders. At their competition at Xavier University in New Orleans the team dominated in their group stage, besting some teams by more than 400 points. This solid performance led to the knockout stages, where they conceded defeat in the quarterfinals.

"We lost in the quarterfinals to the team that ended up winning the tournament," Senior Zack Bobbitt said. "We identified our strong and weak spots, so going forward we know what we need to improve on."

While Quiz Bowl did not take home the trophy, they still were able to qualify for nationals just off their first tournament alone.

"After the stats came out it was shown that we finished fifth or six," Douglass said. "The top 15 percent of

teams attending were able to qualify for nationals."

With the team already qualifying for the national tournament later this spring, Quiz Bowl hopes to attend less close distance tournaments in turn for a few larger, further away tournaments.

"Now that we are qualified for nationals, quiz bowl will decide if we want to have a few larger trips instead of more close distance trips," Douglass said. "It may not happen due to travel expense and other factors, but were hoping it is a major possibility."

While the possibility of farther trips for the remainder of the season remains unknown, what is known is that Quiz Bowl will be attending nationals this year in hopes of clinching the big trophy.

"I was really proud of how we did," Senior Charley Hutchinson said. "After 3/4 of the A team graduated last year, we were a little worried about the first tournament, but we had a really strong performance and are very glad to have qualified for nationals already. It was a tough tournament and we ended up coming 5th out of 27 teams, so we did better than we were expecting."

St. Andrew's has always brewed academic excellence. This continued tradition has started a new tradition of its own. Quiz Bowl is consistently a contender for the national title each year, and this year they hope to bring home all the marbles.

QUALIFIED FOR NATIONALS THEIR LAST TOURNAMENT

14 YEARS OF QUALIFYING FOR NATIONALS SINCE 2002

5TH PLACE IN FIRST TOURNAMENT OF THE YEAR