

Jeff High's newest club is all about inclusion and acceptance

A group of students have created a new club: the Jeffersonville High School Gay-Straight-Trans Alliance, which is devoted to educating the community on the LGBT and challenges they face

By **Adley McMahel**

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This time last year, junior Matthew Begin was talking to his friend Noah Fetter, who attends Silver Creek High School.

While their talk encapsulated many different topics, unity and acceptance of others was at the forefront.

As their conversation continued, they began discussing the possibility of creating a club to unite different LGBT friendships, and educating students on mental health that is not taught in the traditional system.

Begin asked assistant principal Marianne Fisher her thoughts on starting up a club at Jeff, and she helped him through the initial process. Sophomore Ryan Curry overheard Begin and Fisher talking about it one day, and thought the idea was great and wanted to contribute.

Thus, the team of students created the Jeffersonville High School Gay-Straight-Trans Alliance.

All the club had to do was find a sponsor, and space to have their meetings. Mrs. Virginia Herfel, a counselor, was glad to take the responsibility. The group had their first meeting in the AP conference room on Dec. 6.

The kick-off meeting was met with support, and the members discussed future goals and achievements.

"We are trying to get more sponsors so that we can do things like community service projects," Begin said. "We also have recently been discussing the possibility of a dance."

The club's two main goals are to have fun, and educate the community on the differences of the LGBT and the challenges that they face everyday.

What does the Q in LGBTQ stand for?

Not everyone knows what the Q in LGBTQ stands for: (L)esbian, (G)ay, (B)isexual, and (T)ransgender. The Q stands for (Q)uestioning or (Q)ueer.

"We want to normalize queer people and not isolate them and make sure that they know it's okay to be yourself," Curry said.

Their motto is "providing education and advocacy for equality and understanding."

Begin says that all students are welcomed, even if you would just like to come and support, or attend a meeting to see what they are about. The members are very excited to have this opportunity, and are anxious to see where they go.

photo by Kristen Jacobs



Tully and Treat's High School Help

What is it like to grow up as a female in today's society?

Chloe's Answer:

Being a girl in general is not easy, but being a teenage girl is even harder. It feels like there's a constant expectation that has to be met: look this way, feel that way.

When I started high school, I was always comparing myself to other girls, and sometimes I still do. If you live your life trying to be like someone else, nothing will ever feel right.

Our high school years are some of the hardest mentally, too.

Obviously gender doesn't determine whether or not one suffers from depression or anxiety, but it is more common in teenage girls than boys. Some doctors say this is due to girls maturing faster; therefore we are more vulnerable to these feelings.

For me, I think it has a lot to do with the social stresses put on girls. As humans, we want validation and acceptance from those around us, and that can affect our self esteem and confidence in a major way. For us girls, I think we try really hard to be good enough, pretty enough, and smart enough.

For as long as women can remember, they have been seen as inferior to men. This has caused women to have to prove themselves to anyone that sees them as different. You're only a teenager for so long, so you can't waste your time trying to prove yourself to people who probably don't even care.

I think you have to reach a point where you love yourself for who you are, and you realize that you are good enough, in every way.

Emily's Answer:

Growing up as a girl in today's age is obviously easier than it was for the women that came before us. We don't have to fight for the right to vote, for equal education, or any "real" barriers keeping us from our male counterparts.

However, this does not mean that growing up as a young girl is a walk through the park. There are a plethora of societal barriers that are holding young girls back from their full potential.

Throughout my entire life, I've felt a pressure about having to be a certain way. I have to be smart and level headed, but not smart enough to threaten my femininity. I have to wear clothes that are in style and that are flattering and feminine, but I have to make sure I'm not

By Tristan Jackson
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Commentary: A Man's Intrepretation of Feminism

On Aug. 18, 1920, the 19th Amendment of the United States Constitution was ratified, which made it illegal to prevent a person from voting because of their gender.

The decision marked one of the high points of the feminist movement, which had been around since the first Women's Conference, which was held in 1848 in Seneca Falls, NY.

However now, the movement is a shell of its former self, based around blaming men for every obstacle a woman faces, and assuming men have somehow collaborated to oppress women.

Rape culture, pay gap, and blindness to the oppression of women of other cultures and religions all exemplify the ignorance of some who call themselves "feminists".

In all fairness, there are plenty of people who fight for women's rights without putting others down. I applaud those people.

Unfortunately for them, they are overshadowed by the ignorant, man-bashing feminists who don't know what they're fighting for.

The "rape culture" modern feminism made up does not exist.

Rape is illegal. The majority of people who have never sexually assaulted anyone in their life know it is not okay. Even if it was real -- which it isn't -- women would be a part of it, because women can rape men, just as easily as a man can rape a women.

In Somaliland, the country recently passed its first law outlawing rape. Before then, women were forced to marry their rapist.

That's a rape culture, and it's disrespectful for feminists in the U.S. to compare their situation to that of

the women in Somaliland, or the many other countries where women are treated as second-class citizens.

Social media has magnified the nonsense of modern feminism.

In America, women are glorified for dressing up as the female reproductive system to try and prove a point that has absolutely no context. But somehow, an Iranian woman is making no headlines for taking off her hijab as a method of protest against the tyrannical government that requires her to wear the headdress.

Rather than fighting for these women, feminists dis-

"The point I'm trying to make is blaming men for every problem women face is not an effective, or reasonable method."

respect women like her, and the religion as a whole by wearing hijabs to prove a point.

If the feminist movement was really for the equality of all women, then there would be an uproar over this woman's incarceration. To me, that's a protest -- not complaining about unsolvable problems that don't require any work to protest, just a few taps of a finger to compose a tweet.

Twitter has given the ignorant feminists a voice, and they make sure to use it. A point twitter feminists have tired to make is that a woman makes less than a man for equal work. The only thing I can say about that is I'll believe it when I see sufficient evidence or experience it myself.

If you cite statistics on this matter, you lose a lot of credibility when you use biased "facts" from Liberal media organizations.

As a man in the workforce, I can say for certain that I made the same as every man and woman for doing the same job. I think if there is any discrepancy in pay within a company, it's based off work ethic, dependability, and qualification -- not gender.

Believe it or not, I have no intention to bash women for what they believe. If your goal is to fight for equality, go for it. The point I'm trying to make is blaming men for every problem women face is not an effective, or reasonable method.

I also don't buy into the myth that men face absolutely no sexism, and I think custody battles are a good exemplification of a way men are unfairly treated in our society.

Women are given custody of children over five times as much as men during disputes. This is because women are believed to be better caretakers by the courts -- which can be debated -- and I personally believe it's true, women in my eyes are typically, but not always, but caretakers.

I am all for doing what's right for a child when their parents become divorced, I just don't legitimately believe living with the mother is the right choice over 80-percent of the time.

That, along with the man-bashing that modern feminism does, are the main problems I have with the movement. You can't be for equality if you turn your back on sexism, or ignore the fact that it goes both ways.

Until modern feminists realize this, I won't view it as a legitimate movement. I'm all for equality for every person in this country, but I have major problems with the way they are fought for.

By Chloe Treat & Emily Tully

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showing too much of any part of my body.

It took me awhile to actually realize these inconsistencies in the standards for boys and girls. I can thank my parents for that, for always encouraging me to be unapologetically me, and to not necessarily have to fit to these stereotypes.

Just because I was in this environment at home, doesn't mean that it's like that everywhere. Some of my earliest memories of this unfamiliar judgement were in a school setting. Being told to act "ladylike" was a very common statement that was pushed upon myself and my friends.

At the time we were embarrassed and

ashamed. Were we not ladies anymore because we would rough-house and play pretend outside?

It's taken me an extended amount of time to realize that women, as a whole, are held to societal standards that are dangerous and detrimental to one's vision of themselves.

One of my favorite sayings is, "There is no wrong way to be a woman." I try to remind myself of this consistently and empower myself and other girls to continue to encourage each other to be the best we can be at whatever we want.

No matter the connotation it comes with.

