

Extending Freedom to Learn for Students



CROSSING THE CARO
... LINE ...

Marriage: Not the End (Except in Sitcoms)

CAROLINE REN
Editor in Chief

With same-sex marriage legal in 36 states and the District of Columbia, with a 37th pending, the Supreme Court will discuss whether or not it should be legal nationwide on April 28, according to the New York Times and USA Today. While it is laudable to see such progress occurring, it does not end the hostile attitude prevalent in the collective social consciousness.

Much like how the civil rights movement did not end racism, one spotlighted step forward cannot be upheld as a reason to stop advocating for equality. According to the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, over 2,000 incidents of violence against LGBT people, including 25 homicides, were reported in 2012. These numbers do not even account for unreported incidents and suicides that result from years of antagonization and bullying.

To promote safety for LGBT individuals, we must dismantle structural oppression, but we must also further take it upon ourselves to educate our peers and later on, future generations. The root problem of any institutional discrimination is societal mindset, and that is what we must seek to change. To stand by while others toss around harmful slurs is to allow the LGBT community to be treated as a joke. It's time we stopped any of our own damaging habits, even if they are not meant to be taken seriously, because the implications magnify and eventually become the destructive force that hurts, hinders and even kills people for simply being who they are.

BARRY CHEUNG
Staff Writer

Children of many generations have always been forced to go to school by law, parents' expectations of them getting a formal education and the notion that they must learn how to become an adult by managing life wisely, even as early as high school. However, has it ever come to mind that students are being trained to do things a certain way by almost every one of their teachers? Students should be given more freedom on how to learn rather than being forced to do things a certain way.

According to the Natural Child Project, schools seem to be the most anti-democratic, most authoritarian, most destructive and most dangerous institutions of our society. Schools and teachers set a basic guideline for students to follow. It is this power that

causes students to lack the maturity to last in the real world. A teacher with a biased perspective on a certain topic for essay prompts or certain steps on



how to do a problem can limit the options a student has. That takes the freedom of thought away from the student, since they are faced with an

ultimatum: either listen to the instructions given or fail. Students should not have to face such situations. They should be given the option of choosing the learning style they want, the speed at which they go and the freedom to think without being penalized.

Although it seems risky to have students to manage themselves because they lack maturity compared to adults, it will benefit them more to do so. As students progress through each year of school, college and the workforce loom closer and closer. In college and the workplace, there is more freedom than has been experienced in high school. If a student has not yet adapted to the freedom of adulthood throughout high school, then it would

be expected that they would abuse the surplus amount of freedom that they would be given in the future. That extra amount of freedom will probably influence the adult self of the student to waste their time rather than fulfilling their duties in the near future. Schools should give their students the freedom to manage their own studies by allowing them to do things such as setting their own schedules for a chapter's worth of assignments that would be due by a certain time, so that eventually the students will take responsibility for themselves.

Real learning thrives when real choices are given. If students always have to face a situation where they cannot do anything except follow and conform to what is spelled out for them, then they may never learn or hold responsibility for what will occur in the near future. The best option that schools should give students would be the right to take responsibility for themselves.

Cutting Off Keystone

JOSEPH NEY-JUN
Staff Writer

It can be said that the world runs on oil, or at least our lives as we know it. Although it is not the most efficient energy source, the infrastructures of many countries have been built around it. According to TransCanada, the company who funds Keystone XL Pipeline, it is a system of pipes that would run from Alberta, Canada to oil refineries on the Gulf Coast. The plans for the pipeline have been in the works since early 2009, but President Obama has vetoed the bill and continuously put it on hold since his first term.

With so much of our infrastructure built around oil, the pipeline seems like a lucrative project. However, a society built around oil is living on borrowed time as it is. The President is right to veto the pipeline.

If only money were taken into account the question of whether or not to construct the pipeline would be answered with an obvious yes, but the long-term repercussions on the environment would be far worse than a lighter wallet. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), crude oil can pollute bodies of water and also cause the degradation of soil it soaks into, not to mention that the method of extracting the oil from the sands in Canada is extremely harmful. The EPA has also noted that refinery emissions on the Gulf Coast would increase.

The pipeline would create jobs, but only so long as the oil flows. It is within our best interest to do whatever we can to slow climate change and reduce our impact on the environment, or in this case, prevent any impact at all. Socrates once said, "Society grows when old men plant trees whose shade they will never sit in." While the pipeline might increase our quality of life now and maybe push down gas prices a little, the consequences would affect our children and our children's children.

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Security Shutdown Stop

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Staff Writer

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) was founded in 2002 to prevent terrorism, protect citizens, respond to disasters, manage U.S. borders and facilitate customs and exchange including administering and enforcing immigration laws. According to the National Journal, after President Obama announced his executive plan to stop the deportation of millions of undocumented immigrants, Republicans proposed a bill that would thoroughly fund the department, but only if it also obstructed the President's action. According to USA Today, if was not funded thoroughly, it would have shut down by the end of February.

Basically, the bill would have shut down Homeland Security and possibly would have threatened the safety of U.S. citizens to stop Obama's plan. Fortunately, the shutdown was averted and on March 4, Congress

passed legislation to fund the DHS for the rest of the year without restricting the President's plan in any way. Yet if the department did shut down, the most essential agencies within the it, including the Transportation Security Administration, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Secret Service and the Coast Guard, would continue to work, but they would not be paid. The stopping of financing would make it harder for the working DHS employees to efficiently respond to disasters and possibly allow the United States to become vulnerable to crime and acts of terrorism.

Shutting down the DHS would have been unfortunate for the families of the department's employees and even more so for American citizens who depend on their service. Although the shutdown threat was seriously considered, thankfully it was not carried out and department employees were able to carry on with their work and get paid for it.

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