

Gender-Neutral Bathrooms: Continued from Page 1

on the official Lehigh directories. The eight others are 'single-stalled' handicapped restrooms, and are labeled as such on the directories.

It's great that we want more gender-neutral bathrooms on campus, but if we marched into an administrator's office with a list of our demands, they would laugh in our faces, using their perceived sentiments of the greater Lehigh community as a crutch to avoid progress. For this reason, we knew we needed proof that the Lehigh community perceives gender-neutral bathrooms as a positive change. After an extensive survey of 340 Lehigh students, Elizabeth Pines, '16, found that sentiments on campus are encouraging of gender-neutral bathrooms. 73% of participants reported knowing what gender-neutral bathrooms are, and **63% would be in support of implementing more gender-neutral bathrooms on campus.**

Although the survey results did not prove to be unanimous, a majority is in support of this cause, which means there is ample support to begin taking action. That being said, what steps can be made to improve the approval rating to above 80%?

The first step is easy: we can educate the 14% of students who are unaware of what gender-neutral bathrooms are and change the minds of the 23% opposed. We can talk until we're blue in the face about the benefits to the transgender and gender non-conforming community, but that probably won't attract much attention. We need to educate those who are not aware of these issues in a way they will understand and value. We need to make them see the personal value of implementing gender-neutral bathrooms, such as convenience. Students and faculty would no longer need to navigate the hallways of Chandler Ullman or trek

across the length of the UC to find an appropriate restroom. Convenience is key for everyone.

So how do we educate? November is Transgender Awareness month and Spectrum will be hosting events to further the understanding to the Transgender community. In addition, Spectrum will be petitioning for more gender-neutral bathrooms on campus, with the support of hundreds of Lehigh students and faculty. The petition, along with the results of Elizabeth's survey, will be presented to Lehigh administration to display the support garnered by the greater Lehigh community. Our proposal to convert all single-stalled gendered bathroom into a gender-neutral bathroom may not seem earth-shattering and will more than likely go unnoticed by the common student, but it will make a world of difference to many members of the LGBT community.

The F Word

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Gender-neutral bathrooms at Lehigh: why Lehigh should listen

Eryne Boyle
Elizabeth Pines
Class of '15, Class of '16

"On a crisp November morning, I scurried from Lewis Lab to Rauch, where my Introduction to Accounting course was held. Given my impending exams and other obligations, I ingested one too many sips of Red Bull that morning and needed to use the restroom. For the typical person, the thought of using the public restroom wouldn't cause much unrest, but given the responses I receive toward my gender non-conforming physical appearance, I am apprehensive to use multi-stalled public restrooms. However, this particular urge was too much to ignore, so I put aside my anxiety and opened the door to RBC 134. To my relief, there were no other females in sight when I entered the bathroom and I ducked into a stall. A minute later, I threw my backpack over my shoulder, undid the latch on the HinyHiders stall, and dashed to the sinks. At this point, another female had entered the restroom and was applying mascara in front of the mirrors. I smiled at her timidly in the reflection of the mirror while lathering my hands with soap. Instead of greeting me with the same kindness, she shot a disgusted look in my direction and asked, "You do know this is the women's

restroom, right?"

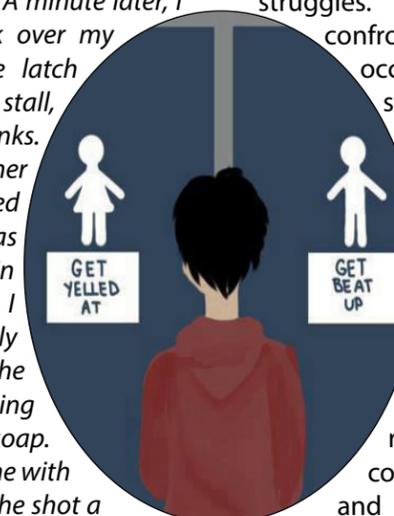
"I know," I replied. And as quickly as I entered, I shuffled out of the women's restroom, thinking to myself, This is exactly why I avoid using public restrooms." – Eryne Boyle, '15

To give a little background about the subject, Eryne identifies as female but has short hair and dresses in masculine clothing. Because of her physical appearance, she is classified under the umbrella term, "gender non-conforming." She has faced these issues since she first cut her hair short at the age of eight and continues to face the same struggles. These uncomfortable confrontations don't only occur in bathrooms; she faces other daily struggles, the most common of which is being referred to by the incorrect gender pronoun. Unfortunately, the adversity Eryne faces in regards to her experiences in public restrooms is *nothing* compared to the insulting and assaulting language received by other gender non-conforming individuals. It is certainly

minimal when compared to the physical assault faced by some transgender individuals.

Eryne represents one of approximately six gender non-conforming/transgender students or faculty on Lehigh's campus, all of whom have anxieties and fears of using public restrooms both at Lehigh and in other public capacities. These experiences, fears, and anxieties are in no way Lehigh-specific; however, if steps can be taken for these individuals to feel comfortable doing something as simple as utilizing a public restroom, then the Lehigh community has an obligation to engage in an exploration of how this could be accomplished.

A successful way to foster an inclusive environment in all the spaces Lehigh offers is through the implementation of gender-neutral bathrooms. Commonly misunderstood, gender-neutral bathrooms are simply restrooms that are available to all people, regardless of gender identity or expression. They range from 'single-stall' restrooms to restrooms with both stalls and urinals. Currently, Lehigh has less than ten known gender-neutral bathrooms available to students, only two of which are labeled "gender-neutral"



Gender in a Global Context Discussion

Fri, November 22, 1-2pm
Women's Center UC 207

Vday Sal's Fundraiser

Sun, November 24, 4-10 pm
Sal's Brick Oven Pizza
South Bethlehem

Don't Forget Tuesday@ Noon Discussions!

Held Tuesdays At 12pm
Women's Center UC 207

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Available 24/7 every day of the year.

Being a woman in Army ROTC: embracing femininity

By Abigail Ubbelohde
Class of '16

In high school I would have never considered myself a "girly girl." Yes, I love to dress myself well, and I had plenty of female friends. But I figured I was just a girl of average 'girlyness.' When I began college, this changed slightly.

I decided as a high school junior that I wanted to join the Army. My father was an Army engineer for 26 years and I wanted to follow in his footsteps. So, upon entering college, I knew I wanted to be in the ROTC program. In short, ROTC is the Reserve Officer Training Corps. The program provides students in college with military training similar to a service academy, but while enjoying a more 'normal' college experience. After graduation, these ROTC Cadets commission into the U.S. Army as officers.

So, imagine me, a small girl with minimal arm muscle, unsure of how to wear my uniform, walking into a lecture hall for the pre-year briefing. Knowing no one, I sat by myself at the end of a row, scanning the faces of all the other cadets clad in Army camouflage. I started to notice something. In a room of at least 60 cadets, I was one of maybe ten women. It was shocking to me; I had stepped out of the comfort of my all-girls high school into college ROTC, a male-dominated organization. While this is not a bad thing, it is a hard thing to adjust to. Contrary to high school, all of a sudden I felt very girly and out of my element. Although I've been in the program now for 7 months, there are still times I feel out of place.

Beginning in the 1940s, when women were first permitted to join, the Army made ample room for females. This allowance of females has since progressed and today women



make up almost 14% of the active duty Army personnel. Women are more present today, and there are no times where I feel unwelcome in the program as a woman. The Army does hold onto a measure of uniformity, and because of this, women can be made to feel slightly less feminine. While in uniform, I am not allowed to wear my hair down, wear jewelry, paint my nails. I must wear my hair in a low, tight bun and choose minimal makeup. The uniforms also are unisex, and don't exactly allow for more room where women need it, say our chests or backsides. This military uniformity has a way of making me feel less womanly. However, that is where my attitude comes in, because I try to reflect my gender while participating in ROTC, but I still desire to be treated as a leader and an equal, as I should.

The general Army mindset towards women, in my opinion, is as follows: yes, they make a place for females, but the most respect for women is created when the women can keep up with the men. There is no problem with having women in the Army, or in ROTC, but it is the best when women

can beat the men. I have learned that as a woman, I have to be able to hold my own. I can do that, but in a way I also want to show I can do that while still being feminine. I don't have to masculinize myself. But rather, I can keep my outer feminine shell while hardening it to the elements of the Army life.

An example of this are the physical fitness standards in the Army. The minimum standard for women in my age group for pushup is nine. Nine pushups? Nonsense. I can do 50. That is more than some of the freshman men, and the same is true for sit-ups. These are instances where I feel I am proving myself. I am getting higher scores on our physical fitness tests than a few boys my age. Even though the standards are lower, I am still doing more reps than them, and I believe I am respected for that.

Another example of this could be through our field training exercises. We are taught during class and lab how to react to certain things on the battlefield. We are also taught different squad movement techniques and the different types of possible actions

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Harassment at Lehigh: Continued from Page 3

are people lining up to do it? If these stories don't sound familiar to you, check out No Longer Silent (nolongersilentLU.tumblr.com). The problem isn't just that there are racists, sexists, and homophobes at Lehigh, but that we let them get away with it on a regular basis. From one story, where a guest at a frat party was derided as a "North Korean chink" while the party hosts watched in silence: "I honestly could not give less of a shit about this guy saying these hateful things... I do give a damn about the people who looked on, and didn't say a word. I thought I went to a university that had enough competent people to realize these issues don't go away by turning your back to them."

When I failed to call out the creep bragging about harassing women, I reinforced his expectation that others saw his behavior as normal, acceptable, or funny - that he could tell that story without any negative social consequences. I should have spoken up. When the student in the story above saw the hosts of the party willfully ignoring the person berating him, he learned that that kind of

hostility was tolerated, regardless of whether the hosts agreed with the harasser's remarks. They should have spoken up.

"I thought I went to a university that had enough competent people to realize these issues don't go away by turning your back to them."

The actions of any of us reflect on all of us. I don't want to be ashamed of my school, I want to be proud to say I'm a Lehigh student. If you feel the same way, here's what I think you should do: if you see someone doing something discriminatory, confront them publicly and immediately. Make them uncomfortable. They're doing it because they expect everyone to let them do it. Deny them the social license they expect. Do this even if - especially if - you're a bystander to the incident. Remove unrepentant bigots and harassers from your fraternities, sororities, clubs, etc and exclude them from parties. Don't attend events held

by organizations that fail to do this. If speaking up seems intimidating, get some like-minded friends to back you up or make an anonymous report. Do not be silent.

Greeks, if you're worried that a few bad actors are ruining your reputation, then find them, confront them, and get them to stop. If they refuse, remove them from your houses. Don't belittle or ignore reports of racism, sexism, homophobia, etc. - treat them as serious problems to be addressed. These problems are entirely within your power to solve. The complaint is NOT that all Greek students are racists, but that the Greek community - as well as everyone else, in every part of the Lehigh community - isn't doing enough to condemn and discourage the intolerant among us. If we all start making noise whenever someone does something unacceptable, I think we can really improve things.

There's another benefit to this plan: if enough of us start visibly and publicly calling out the creeps, the racists, and the homophobes, then we learn something about the people that are still not speaking up. Those are the ones to avoid.

Brenda Martinez: Founder's Day speech excerpt

"I have to be honest and admit that I arrived on campus ignorant and angry. I had one worldview as a Latina from South Central and Lehigh challenged every part of my identity. Sitting in classrooms listening to professors such as Charles French introduce the teachings of Socrates, Edurne Portela recreating the struggles and victories of the Zapata movement, James Peterson speaking on the Prison Industrial Complex and the injustices we face today, or sitting in the offices of Seth Moglen, Margarida Arsenio, Rita Jones, Kashi Johnson, and Tyrone Russell (to name a few) challenged me intellectually and gave

me a new found love for education. Everything I learn in the classroom inspires my work outside of it.

Some of the work I'm most proud of has been possible with collaborative leadership. I've worked with my Dream & Act LU team in bringing the first Mexican-American Pulitzer Prize winner, Jose Galvez, to campus, worked with my sorority Lambda Theta Alpha Latin Sorority Inc., in establishing the Ladies of Tomorrow Mentorship Program, and worked with the Muslim Student Association in bringing the

first Islam Awareness Week to campus. All of this has been inspired by the need to educate, as I've been educated.

It also stems from the need to address the Lehigh culture and the issues that are often swept underneath the rug. Are you aware of the Lehigh bubble? Are you aware of the prejudice that many students face on campus? This pandemic spreads beyond the Lehigh hills and into the 'real world.' If we cannot challenge our own institution then how are we supposed to challenge society?"



What's She's Got Game? Healthy Body Image at Lehigh

By Jimil Ataman
Class of '14

She's Got Game is a discussion group focused on female athletes. We meet once a month to explore and discuss a variety of topics pertaining to the life and challenges associated with being a female student athlete. We discuss how such issues are relevant to life at Lehigh as well as in the larger context of being a student athlete. In the past we've discussed topics like over-medication and addiction, alcohol use and abuse, stress management, and body image. The group serves a safe space for female athletes to grow and learn together. We seek to gain the tools and understanding needed to maintain a healthy balance between being a woman, a student, and an athlete.

By Emily Prendergast
Class of '15

Routine objectification and sexualization of men and women in the media and other cultural institutions can lead to anxiety, shame, self-disgust, undermined confidence and discomfort with one's own body. This issue is especially pertinent amongst young adults who are in the process of forming their own lives. To help combat this issue and promote a healthy unitary sense of self, the Women's Center will be hosting Love Your Body Day on October 17th. The purpose of Love Your Body Day is to celebrate all people – regardless of size, age, skin color, ethnicity, ability or gender identity.

During the month of October Post-Its with inspirational quotes on them will be displayed all over campus, from academic buildings to first year dorms to Greek housing, to remind

students and faculty that everyone is beautiful and that they should accept themselves for who they are. This project provides anonymous compliments to Lehigh's community throughout the day and will make the campus a little bit brighter, happier, and more accepting of different body types.

You're invited to come to the UC Front lawn on Love Your Body Day, October 17th, from 11-12pm and then join us again in the Upper UC from 12-1pm to tell us what you love about your body. Lehigh's Dietician, Carrie Gerencher, will also be giving a special presentation on healthy eating habits and how to be mindful of one's body at 5pm.

If you'd like more information about Healthy Body Image events or would like to help out, please contact luhealthybody@gmail.com. And don't forget to LOVE YOUR BODY!

Anonymous Lehigh women share their stories and opinions

Meghan Barwick, '15, has created an anonymous entry form online via google docs for Lehigh's women to post stories of any type of harrasment: sexism, racism, etc. These entries and more will also appear in The Goblet online magazine at www.thegobletmagazine.blogspot.com. Look for the link on The Goblet's Facebook page!

I say 'dude,' 'man' and 'bro' a lot because that's the way myself and my friends from home talk and once I was talking to a guy at a party and he said "You say dude a lot...it's not attractive when girls talk like that." [...]

Upon discovering that I received a leadership position in a Lehigh organization I am heavily involved in, a male member competing for the same position confronted me. He looked at me and said "The only reason you got the job is because you're a girl, you know that right? You didn't deserve it."

I hear guys call girls 'sluts' all the time as the walk around at night just because of the clothes they are wearing. There are countless times guys talk about girls "wanting it" because they're wearing a short skirt or revealing top. It's disgusting.

"Oh, you're a not a lesbian?" He immediately puts a hand on my ass. "Well, then... How far can I go right now without it being creepy?"

Being a women in engineering here at Lehigh never initially bothered me- I knew I'd be outnumbered but my male classmates but I never felt any type of sexism because of it. However, one summer session my two roommates and I were in the same class where we were much more outnumbered than usual (not that we cared). [...] However, that fall semester I ran into one of the guys from my class and he asked me if I or any of my girl friends had passed that class because "everyone thought we sounded really dumb." Funny thing was that he was retaking that class and we got A's.

A lot of the time when I'm walking to a party with my friends a car full of guys will pass by and yell "sluts" out the window. I know they're harmless words, but it's still bothersome.

"What are you talking about? You wanted this."

This is a texting conversation with a boy I had made out drunk the night before. He was not very receptive to the fact that I did not wish to sleep with him and even though he kept trying to convince me. He thought it was funny. He told me "No means yes and yes means anal" after I told him he needed to learn the meaning of the word "no." When I told him he was a douchebag, he responded with, "I'll take that as a compliment." This was a year after he had graduated from Lehigh and he stills acts like this.

Harrasment in the Lehigh community

By David Tench
Class of '13

I was at a small party at an acquaintance's house off-campus last year and there were a few people there I didn't know. We were swapping funny stories and one of the guys I didn't know started telling me about a girl he had seen in Ahart's. After describing her body in detail to me (I forget a lot of the details but he used the phrase "dick-sucking lips"), he told me how he had made creepy, vaguely sexual comments to her. He laughed as he described her confused and uncomfortable reaction, and suddenly it became clear that that was all there was to the story - her reaction was the punch line. As he ended it he was grinning expectantly at me, like he expected a high-five. I kind of disengaged from conversation with him but didn't say anything about it. The thought of confronting

him about it was uncomfortable, and I let it go.

"Her reaction was the punchline."

That guy expected me to laugh. He felt confident that a male Lehigh student he didn't know would not only be ok with harassing strange women, but also find it funny. I probably wasn't the first person he had told that story to. Had he ever gotten a negative reaction to it?

Since the beginning of the FBR movement earlier this semester, some students have come forward with reports of discrimination and harrasment at Lehigh, many of which took place in the Greek community. The most common reaction I've heard from students (many involved in greek life) goes something like "You're accusing all greek students of being racist, sexist, homophobic monsters.

I treat women with respect and have black friends, so you're wrong." There are two reasons why this response is wrong: first, no one thinks that all white/male/greek/rich/Christian/straight people are racist or sexist. I think everyone agrees that while there are bigots among us, they're not the majority. Second, it's not necessary for the majority of students to be awful for the Lehigh culture to become toxic and alienating to historically oppressed groups. All you need is a small but active population of harassers and a culture that tolerates them.

Why is Lehigh a place where it is safe to yell racial slurs out car windows but unsafe for two men to publicly hold hands? Why are pro-rap performances being applauded at Open Mic nights in Lambertson? Why is a fraternity explicitly requiring statements of racism as a requirement for entry into their party - and why

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V-Day at Lehigh: why it's so important

By Emily Poché
Class of '16

Outgoing. Loud. Confident. Leader. Sensible. These are words that commonly have described me in the past. These are the strong, tough characteristics of someone you'd expect to take the helm of a Women's Center event, and to champion for rights for everyone. Undeniably, there is truth in these descriptions; time and time again I've been reminded of how inexorable these characteristics are from my personality. That being said, they're not the reasons that pushed me into V-day as an organization in the first place. The truth is much darker and much more hushed, something I mention once a year at Take Back the Night or in times of utmost duress to my closest friends. Funny, brash and smart

may all describe me, but so another word that I sounds considerably less liberated: **victim**. My foray into the V-day organization came from trying to come to terms with my own gender violence experiences. At first, it was a supportive and cathartic way to deal with the one descriptor that I'm not so proud of. I wanted to raise awareness that even the loudest, giggliest, most outgoing people can still be victims, and that those victimization effects linger far longer than the act itself.

As the co-producer and a returning performer, I can say that V-day is an international force that has changed not only the situations of our beneficiaries around the world, but also of its volunteers. I have become so much more comfortable in admitting the acts of gender violence that have been committed against me because

I know that a large group of people is there supporting and actively fighting against stories like mine. Their commitment to ending gender violence and helping victims through their healing process made me feel safe and at ease for the first time in years. Not every day during V-day is so serious; sometimes we're polishing off trays of cookies or holding sex trivia, but the underlying message is the same: that the violence has to stop and support must continue endlessly. I feel like a part of two global communities because of the V-day foundation. On one hand, V-day has helped me as a victim, to realize how many others there are like me and that I am not to blame. On the other, I can feel myself making a difference, making a change and making an impact as a leader, a voice and now, as a producer.

Confessions of a “Non-Gineer”: being a journalist at Lehigh

By Jackie Tenreiro
Class of '16

“What kind of engineer are you?”
“The journalist kind.”

The rest plays out like I book I’ve read ten times over: that confused crinkle of the brow, the sudden pitying tone of voice as if my vocational future is doomed, the classic question, “but what are you going to do with that?”

The comedy is if you had asked me about what I wanted to do a year ago, I couldn’t have had a more polar-opposite response. Cardio thoracic surgery was my calling and science research ruled my life. And even upon sharing those future career goals with my peers, I was met with skepticism. “A girl like you, cut out for medical school? Are you sure about that?”

So I am either an already-failed writer or the wrong sex for the job. Either way, my future looks grim.

But what I cannot seem to fathom is the source for these generalizations and classifications, these preconceived

notions that every person you meet with an impressive sounding major will become wildly successful, and everyone in “Arts and Crafts” is digging their own career grave. What’s more – the surprise when students don’t fit into their sex’s “traditional roles.” There is still recognizable surprise in my peers’ voices – “she’s an electrical engineer?” and “he’s a theater major?”

The bottom line is that what’s easy for some isn’t for others – nothing is a “dumb class” or “easy major.” The female math whiz might freeze at essay writing, the guy who’s majoring in art history might also have a knack for biochemistry. What we choose to pursue should not lessen perceptions of our character.

We are *all* jumping into the same terrifying economy and unending job search – journalists, engineers, and female surgeons alike. We are all going to have points of struggle, goals met and years of hard work ahead of us. While some of us might be the minority in our chosen fields, that doesn’t mean

we’re guaranteed to fail. We’re all at Lehigh – that says enough about the intelligence and potential we possess.

There was a point in my life when what I wanted to do sounded impressive, and being a girl with that medical goal raised doubt. But now, suddenly, with a major in the humanities and a “feminine” career goal, I’m nothing special.

I’m still the same person – same work ethic, same drive, same competence and potential. I haven’t lost my ability to succeed in the sciences. It just so happened that, like many, many, others, I changed my mind.

Someone, somewhere, has to be that bestselling author, that Nobel Prize winner and that life-saving surgeon. When all is said and done, it won’t come down to whether those people are women or men or whether their college major raised eyebrows. It’s what they *do* that’s going to matter.

In the end, I’ll be holding a pen and not a scalpel in hand, but I think there’s hope for me yet.

Lezbehonest: being a lesbian in Greek Life

By Erica Schmeer
Class of '16

Let’s be honest. When you think of Greek life, “accepting of others” isn’t usually the top quality you associate with fraternities and sororities. The stereotype that follows sorority girls is usually that they are so straight they’d made a pole look curved. A gay girl joined a sorority? “She’s probably just bi or likes to get with girls when she’s drunk” would likely be the most common response.

Coming to Lehigh, I knew that Greek life was a major part of the university’s culture. I will admit that I, too, was one of the people that believed the stereotype of sororities being non-accepting of anyone other than the heterosexual girl who could catch the attention of all the boys in a room simply by entering it.

I wanted to rush, but I had my

hesitations. My mom also was reserved, and told me to be careful. However, I was determined, and completely taken aback by the fact that on the first day of rush, the very first house I visited had an “ally” poster in the window. Not only did that make me feel at ease, but I knew that they were proud of their attributes of tolerance and acceptance and weren’t afraid to show it. All the stereotypes I had in my head began to crumble.

Not once during rush did my sexuality come into play. Not once when I joined my sorority did anyone blink an eye when they found out I was gay. Yes, I am a lesbian member of a sorority. Does that shock you? It very well might if you hold the same stereotypes in your head that I did before joining Greek life.

Let me tell you this; I have never met a more accepting and supportive

group of girls than my sisters. I won’t lie; I still often get the comment, “You’re gay? But you don’t look gay.” For those of you who have said that, please tell me what it “means” to “look gay.” I also have heard that I can “be fixed.” For those of you that believe that, please tell me what is wrong with me. But don’t be fooled—these comments come from Greeks and non-Greeks alike. Being affiliated with a fraternity or sorority does not make you less accepting or more judgmental.

I am proud to say that the sororities on this campus do not fulfill the stereotypes that I used to hold, and I will admit to being wrong. I can’t speak for all sororities on other universities’ campuses; however, my sexuality has not at all affected my ability to be a sister of my chapter, or define who I am.

Gender segregation in Taylor gym

By Cara Bagley
Class of '16

The repetitive thumping of pink Nike sneakers on the barely-intact treadmill on the top floor of Taylor Gym drowns out the faint tune of “Call Me Maybe.” As the numbers on the odometer creep from 4.62 to 4.63 miles, the girl clenches her fists and tucks in her elbows to avoid looking like the flapping chicken that’s attempting to jog on the treadmill across the room. She glances down momentarily to make accidental eye contact with a boy discreetly checking out his new muscle definition in the mirror who happened to look up to see what decent-looking girls decided to do some cardio that day. They both quickly readjust their gaze, as if nothing had happened.

This is typical behavior at Taylor Gym, the main gym for non-varsity athletes at Lehigh University who are looking for another way to stay in shape besides hiking up hills to class. The bottom level of this gym has free weights, machines, a couple of bikes, ellipticals, and Erg rowing machines. The balcony level contains several treadmills, more ellipticals, and more bikes. It also has some hand weights that range from about two to 15 pounds.

What’s interesting about this setup, though, is not *what* is on each level of the gym, but *who*. “I have no desire

to go downstairs,” Emily*, class of ‘16, noted. “That’s where the guys go.” Upon questioning many gym-goers, this seems to be the general consensus: The top floor is for females and the bottom floor is for males. This causes an issue, however, and stunts the breadth of many workouts. If a female is interested in lifting weights but is too shy to venture to the first floor, she is limited to a few hand weights in the corner of the balcony. Similarly, if a male is interested in cardio, he is limited to an elliptical or two on the bottom floor.

This segregation isn’t just taboo, and shyness isn’t the only aspect keeping each gender from crossing the boundary. In fact, there are many judgments passed among gym-goers when someone crosses the line. “I don’t really like it when girls try to come down here and lift weights,” Mark*, class of ‘13, stated. “They don’t know the etiquette. They leave weights lying around, and they don’t let others work in when they’re taking a break. Sometimes [girls] just get in the way.” However other men feel differently. “It’s awesome when a girl has the guts to come down here,” said Alexander*, class of ‘14. “I’m really impressed when I see a girl benching or doing pull-ups. It shows that she’s confident in herself.”

Despite the possible judgments keeping females away from the

lower level of the gym, it is very important for women to incorporate weight lifting into their everyday exercises. According to Livestrong.com, “Although strength training is important for everyone to participate in, women specifically should take part in a regular lifting regime to assist in the maintenance and developing of bone density. Because of hormonal differences, as females get older, they naturally lose density in their bone. The stress that lifting weights places on bones slows deterioration and can even cause bones to grow stronger, reducing the risk of osteoporosis.” Many women use cardio exercise in an effort to maintain strong, healthy bodies. Still, they should incorporate weight training into their regular workouts to reap the maximum benefits of spending time at the gym.

The gender separation dynamic is undeniable at Taylor Gym. Although women often fear venturing to the bottom floor to assimilate with the men and lift weights, there is no reason for them to. As long as everyone is respectful by re-racking weights and being aware of others, most people do not care *who* is on the bottom floor, so get down there! It shows confidence, strengthens bones, and leads to a better overall self-image. Girls, what are you waiting for?

*Names have been changed

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when reaching an objective on the battlefield. There is a stereotypical assumption is that men are better in battle action than females. Boys play war video games, watch war movies, enjoy violence; these things typically don’t attract a woman’s attention. Regardless of this stereotype, I still find myself performing better in field training than some of my male counterparts. I am able to stay level headed and remember the plan that

was briefed at the beginning of the movement; I try not to get caught up in the action too much. I don’t follow the stereotype, and stray from a battle plan just because I’m scared of getting hit, or because trudging through the forest is too dirty for me. Because I follow the operations order and execute the plan as discussed, I have received praise. This is just one other instance where I have felt like I have proven myself as a woman among men.

While I saw myself in high school as a girl of average femininity, I now see myself trying to embrace my femininity in order to stand out in a sea of men. That doesn’t mean I am acting stereotypically girly by giggling and wearing makeup, but that I am embracing my gender, showing that I can beat stereotypes and hang with the guys. I want to be respected for being a woman able to perform above standards and beyond expectations.