

Student Views

This week we asked students what their impressions were of the Learning Center (aka the Cage). Here's what they said...



Sophia Feinerman, Sophomore

"It's a little bit scary. I think about troubled children going and getting help. The teachers in the Cage know how to help students who have learning or behavioral disabilities."



Dylan Horwitz, Junior

"I don't even know what's in the Cage to be honest. I've heard plenty of rumors of the cage and I don't know what to think at this point."



Ethan Straight, Senior

"Kind of secluded and kind of roundabout. I visited once last Friday and that was the only time I've ever found it. And that was by accident."



Seth Deutsch, Senior

"I imagine students that maybe I haven't seen before in the school."



Madeline O'Dwyer, Senior

"I knew someone in the Cage and they were treated poorly by the New Trier administration throughout their whole time at New Trier, even past graduation."



With the new rules in place, the girls track and field team enjoy wearing tank tops to afternoon practice | **Blickstein**

Tank tops don't deserve to be taboo

by *Helen Fagan*

A few weeks ago, some of my JV distance Track and Field teammates started a petition to challenge the decades old rule that banned girls from practicing in tank tops. After talks with the administration, the rule was repealed.

I've run Cross Country and distance Track and Field since my freshman year. Running in a tank top didn't mean much to me. Sure, there are some mornings where all I want is to look cute and run in a Lululemon tank, I have to suppress this infrequent urge.

Most of the time I thought the rule was a nuisance. Like my teammates, I fail to understand how the lack of fabric covering one's shoulder warranted a ban.

The rule was repealed, and we are now allowed to run in thick-strapped, weather-appropriate, not-too-revealing tank tops.

It was my hope, and some probably share the same feeling, that the drama surrounding tank tops would disappear when the ruling was announced. But to the disdain of coaches and athletes alike, the tank top rule still remains an annoying sore that is talked about often.

Even though it's technically "allowed" to sport a tank at practice, the tops still remain taboo.

The day after the ruling was held, my teammate wore a tank to practice. It wasn't a revealing top, merely a crewneck muscle tee that covered almost everything but the shoulders.

My teammates applauded her for her courage to exercise her newfound rights. To tank-lovers, it seemed to be a statement of victory against those who supported the rule. But during our team meeting, she stuck out like a sore thumb. Everyone was whispering about her.

One girl even remarked, "She's my hero!"

I thought heroes were people who saved lives, not those who wore clothing.

A tank top is just another running top, and it should be treated by girls and guys alike as just that.

New Trier, a place that I regard as a relatively progressive community (events such as the Day of Silence and MLK seminars illustrate this) finds track runners in tank tops as a new revelation.

This conservatism is mostly contained to the track team, as it's not improbable to walk into a classroom and see visible undergarments from multiple classmates.

But the drama that still surrounds a simple garment of clothing shows that this conservatism lingers.

Wearing a tank top to practice elicits stares (and compliments) from my teammates, but, apparently, could also elicit stares (and not-so-complimentary comments) from the boys' squad.

A couple of friends on the Boy's Track and Field team said they were informed of the rule change and instructed to refrain from making comments about girls in tank tops.

This may have been a valid precautionary note from the boy's coaches, but it's still absurd that my teammates and I should be worried about getting catcalled during our 800 repeats.

Being catcalled during practice has never been a worry of mine, and I believe that wearing a tank top won't change that. But, the stares (may they be of awe and respect) from my teammates aren't comforting either.

A tank top is just another running top, and it should be treated by girls and guys alike as just that. I just want to blend in and work out!

Hopefully, this drama will fade with time. Although the repealing of the tank top rule is a step in the right direction, everyone still needs to calm down.

It's time to revise religious freedoms in America

by *Emily Wong*

America is known as the Land of the Free, and it's true that we are given many more liberties than citizens of other countries.

In China, freedom of expression is considered only a privilege for the elite. Women in Saudi Arabia aren't allowed to drive on the streets. In France, Islamic followers are banned from wearing hijabs in public institutions.

Still, while we are ahead of most of the world in almost all rights, are we really fulfilling the freedoms we promise to their full extent?

The first amendment alone provides American citizens five basic freedoms: religion, speech, press, assembly, and petition. The respect we have as a country for all of these freedoms could be taken into question, but the one I'll focus on for now is freedom of religion.

Secularism, or the separation of church and state, is not nearly as evident in the US as it is in many other countries.

However, we often seem to restrict the spread of certain ideas or beliefs on the basis of keeping the government religiously unaffiliated or being politically correct.

Obviously, this limitation of freedom is unconstitutional and can often be fought against by citing the first amendment and demanding your freedom of religion. After this, the plaintiff may need to go to court before the defendant even attempts to fix it.

Despite the justice that often follows, the obstacles are too intimidating for most to even speak up. Knowing that fixing the issue will require several phone calls, meetings, and maybe even some time in court, the negatives may seem to outweigh the positives.

In a more specific case, if a student feels that a teacher is being intolerant of his or her beliefs, that student would have to feel pretty strongly about the issue to risk ruining a grade or switching teachers for it.

It's even harder to remedy this situation if your belief isn't so specifically labeled. In other words, you might be able to justify wearing a cross to school, but you'd have a much harder time telling the school board why you refuse to be vaccinated.

Even though this is a moral concern for some religions, certain issues seem to fall under a more political umbrella than others.

According to the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Religious Discrimination Act "requires employers to reasonably accommodate the religious beliefs and practices of applicants and employees."

Despite this effort, employees are still being treated differently based on their personal beliefs.

In 2014, Mozilla CEO Brandon Eich was forced to resign after it was discovered that he donated \$1,000 towards an anti-gay marriage proposition.

It's understandable that Mozilla would let this executive go, with the fear that any affiliation with him would hurt their business, and therefore, their other employees.

Many Christian faiths believe that the Bible speaks against gay marriage. Therefore, preventing it would be consistent with their religious beliefs.

If freedom of religion was really practiced in America, would it still be considered okay for someone to be punished for following his beliefs in his private life?

If holding personal beliefs like this aren't respected, it's unlikely that more public displays of religions would be allowed either.

Many religions like Christianity and Islam believe strongly in Evangelism, or sharing their faith with others. However, many university campuses and other institutions ban this practice.

Some consider it harassment, even if it's as simple as handing someone a Bible or inviting someone to church.

Where these freedoms start to get dicey is when we try to decide what counts as a religion. The US Supreme Court has yet to decide on a satisfactory definition for the term.

Nonetheless, it has decided that ideologies unrelated to a god can still be considered religions. By this definition, Satanists could have just as much of a right to worship as Christians.

Ultimately, the freedoms of one person can only go so far before infringing on the rights of others. Therefore, a cult that believes in human sacrifices cannot use its religion as justification for murder.

The fact is that every American is given the freedom of religion, not the freedom from religion. If the practices of a religion are not harmful to others, it has to right to be exercised by its followers without facing discrimination.