

## Transgendered Girl Scout met with opposition



By Justyn Melrose  
STAFF WRITER

"There are as many different ways to be a girl as there are girls—differences related to race, class, religion, national origin, language, disability and so on," says Cole Thaler, Lambda Legal's former Transgender Rights Attorney. "Having a transgender history or not is just another example of this wonderful variation and diversity."

The recent choice of a Colorado Girl Scouts troop to allow seven-year-old Bobby Montoya, a transgender girl, into the troop was a major step towards transgender equality. Historically, transgender people have been treated as dangerous and deceptive.

In the words of John St. Louis, Guilford student and self-identifying gender-queer femme, the trans community has been looked upon as "a scourge that has been lurking in the dark." Because of this stereotype, there are people who continue to antagonize this newly trans-friendly Girl

Scout troop by boycotting the famous Girl Scout cookies.

"(This plays into) the same narrative that seeks to leave trans-people isolated," says St. Louis.

Those who have been boycotting Girl Scout cookies include a teen Girl Scout known publicly only as "Taylor," who is involved with a group known as HonestGirlScouts. She recently posted a transphobic video on YouTube illustrating the reasons why she believes the transgender community should be unwelcome in the Girl Scouts, an "all-girls" organization.

Taylor believes that it is deceitful not to notify parents and other scouts of a transgender individual in the troop.

"(Girl Scouts) don't notify parents about what each child's genitals look like," Thaler notes.

The idea that it should be necessary to have the appearance of a seven-year-old's genitals be known to her peers and the parents of her peers is both unreasonable and incredibly invasive. All individuals, including Miss Montoya, deserve the right to privacy.

Taylor also defends her desire for a cisgender-only Girl Scouts organization — meaning exclusive to those whose gender and birth sex match — by claiming that a cisgender girl would be unable to identify with a transgender girl.

"There's totally going to be real differences, but there are also real differences

between cisgender girls, there are real differences between different kinds of trans-girls," explains St. Louis. "The notion (of) the (model) cis-woman identity and the (model) trans-woman identity and that they're opposing and unrelatable is a joke."

In my experience, just because someone else has the same sexual organs as me does not mean that I will be able to relate to them. I have had more close female-bodied friends than male-bodied.

Relating to people is certainly not dependent upon what is in one's pants.

One cannot attend a Girl Scout meeting and expect each individual in the room to be able to perfectly relate to one another.

It is unfortunate that seven-year-old Montoya has already met opposition in the form of transphobia and gender normative exclusion. However, this Colorado Girl Scout troop's decision and Bobby's story gives us confidence that we are moving in the right direction, promoting equality among both transgender and cisgender individuals.

I encourage other Girl Scout troops — and even Boy Scout troops — to engage in the global conversation on transgender inclusion and rights, so that young people nationwide may find acceptance among individuals of the same gender, regardless of sex. I have faith that this event will encourage more change and allow people like Bobby across the nation and the world to be themselves.

### Staff Editorial

## The Guilfordian works to represent all Guilford students

Take a look at the front page of The Guilfordian, and you might see an article about student activists joining the Occupy movement in Greensboro. You might read about the proposed amendment to North Carolina's constitution that would ban same-sex marriage and benefits to unmarried couples. You might find a summary of changes to on-campus facilities or policies. Or you might find an article about a local bar.

The Guilfordian has worked, for the last 98 years, to report on news, events and issues that are relevant and important to our student population. We pride ourselves on varied and detailed coverage of the entire college experience, starting with Guilford Orientation and ending with graduation weekend.

Twice in the past two months, articles about local bars have been featured at the bottom of the front page of the paper. While some may think that it is irresponsible of The Guilfordian to publish articles such as these, it should not be seen as The Guilfordian promoting certain behaviors, such as drinking. Rather, we are giving an accurate account of what Guilford students experience.

Guilford students are activists. Guilford was ranked by Newsweek as one of the top schools for social activism in the country in 2008.

Guilford students are accepting. Inside College lists Guilford as one of the top schools for "tolerant of differing opinions" as well as one of the top for "students needing a second chance."

Guilford students are involved. With over 40 student organizations as well as intramural and intercollegiate athletics, Guilford makes it easy for students to participate in any activity they are called to.

Guilford students are world travelers. Recent expansions to the Study Abroad program increased study abroad offerings to over 300 locations around the globe.

Guilford students are partiers. The Princeton Review ranked Guilford 16th in the nation for potheads.

Guilford students are multi-faceted. As you can tell, Guilford students do not fit in any mold—and why should we? Our core values call us to embrace our similarities as well as our differences in creating a community of unique individuals. The Guilfordian celebrates the many aspects of Guilford life, which includes drinking on the weekends as much as on-campus events.

### Letter to the Editor

## SOPA article misses crux of the debate

ARTICLE MISREPRESENTED WHAT THE INTERNET WOULD BECOME IF SOPA AND PIPA WERE PASSED

I was pretty disappointed by the opinion piece titled "SOPA and PIPA not popular, but needed." The piece misses the crux of the debate. The problems with SOPA and PIPA are not that they censor free speech (they do); the issue is that they give the government the power to shut down any website that violates copyright, including (here's the important part) any website that links to copyrighted content. There's a reason Google, Wikipedia, Reddit, and Twitter opposed SOPA/PIPA, and it's not about free speech: if they aren't free to link to content, they don't function. Wikipedia and Reddit blacked out their websites in protest of SOPA/PIPA, but also to demonstrate what the Internet will be like if the bills pass. Think about it. What does Google do? It provides links to websites! I'm frustrated that the piece condemns as "not normal" for Wikipedia to blackout its website to educate people about the problems with SOPA/PIPA, yet does not bat an eyelash at the huge sums the entertainment industry is spending to protect its profits by lobbying for these bills.

My other issue with the piece is the cursory description of the group called "Anonymous." The piece makes no effort to inform the reader about the group beyond their hacking activities, but two minutes of research is all you need to find out that the group is the pseudonym for users of a website called 4chan.org, which is by no means a legitimate organization. Instead, the piece lumps 4chan.

org in with Wikipedia, Google, and other legitimate organizations — and then blames all the opponents of SOPA/PIPA for 4chan's hacking! This is the equivalent of anger at all Muslims for the actions of al Qaeda; it's insulting and wrong to consider al Qaeda as existing on a spectrum with all Muslims, as if Islam is a religion under which people might legitimately arrive at the beliefs of al Qaeda. I understand the weight of the comparison, and I do not make it lightly. I simply take issue with the carelessness with which the piece treats those opposed to the bills.

The piece suggests that we are allowing "expedience and convenience (to) outweigh the morality of our actions," but by that logic, anyone who has used Google or Wikipedia is a criminal. The crucial lesson from this debate is that "piracy" is not so easily definable, nor is every person who views copyrighted content without paying for it an inherently immoral person. Moreover, do the entertainment moguls think that if they shut down every bit of copyright infringement on the Internet, people will suddenly go buy DVDs and CDs of everything they've been downloading? Piracy will never disappear completely, and people are not unwilling to pay for content — they often simply need better and cheaper access. Yet, the entertainment industry is willing to shoot their nose to spite their face, and take much of the Internet with them, in a misguided attempt to protect "intellectual property." Who loses? We do.

Damian Morden-Snipper

REFLECTING GUILFORD COLLEGE'S CORE QUAKER VALUES, THE TOPICS AND CONTENT OF STAFF EDITORIALS ARE CHOSEN THROUGH CONSENSUS OF ALL 16 EDITORS.