

## **APA Division 44 Opposes Anti-Transgender Ban and Encourages Challenging Stigma**

APA Division 44, The Society for the Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity, is opposed to the March 23rd, 2018, White House [memorandum](#) disqualifying transgender persons from service who have received a gender dysphoria diagnosis.

Division 44, The Society for the Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity affirms the American Psychological Association's opposition to this ban:

“The American Psychological Association is alarmed by the administration's misuse of psychological science to stigmatize transgender Americans and justify limiting their ability to serve in uniform and access medically necessary health care....

No scientific evidence has shown that allowing transgender people to serve in the armed forces has an adverse impact on readiness or unit cohesion. What research does show is that discrimination and stigma undermine morale and readiness by creating a significant source of stress for sexual minorities that can harm their health and well-being.”

The memorandum reinforces mental health stigma and transphobia. The order detailed in this memorandum is discriminatory.

In recognition that such acts of discrimination and the perpetuation of stigma can be harmful to our community members (e.g., [Barry, 2009](#)), we encourage Division 44 members to take this opportunity to confront and challenge transphobia (prejudice against transgender people) and cissexism (a bias for cis-gender people, or those whose gender identity corresponds with their assigned sex at birth).

*What can I do to take positive action?*

Transphobia and cissexism are social toxins. In addition to practicing respectful communication, busting myths, and learning about gender diversity from organizations like the [National Center for Transgender Equality](#), we encourage seeking out personal connections with transgender people and those closest with transgender people and amplifying their personal stories. Consider the power of contact (e.g., Allport, 1954, Pettigrew & Tropp, [2006](#), [2008](#)) and personal stories (e.g., [Brookman & Kalla, 2016](#)). Division 44 members are also encouraged to educate others, including friends, students, colleagues, and representatives. Education - including sharing the ways you are impacted by transphobia and cissexism - can have positive ripple effects.

Submitted by the Division 44 Public Policy Committee  
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