

Evidence no. 1:

● "People used to mistake her for a boy, but she had felt proud to be a girl. But now being a girl was like being stuffed into a heavy, constricting costume. She could barely breathe in it. The rules of the universe were fixed: You look a certain way and so you have to act a certain way and people are going to treat you a certain way." Pg. 39

Connections

Both of these quotes are about "Samantha" turned Andrew, who went through a period of gender dysphoria but eventually discovered who he truly was.

- Ties back to theme of "Identity" as it deals with discovering your newfound identity
- Societal expectations of a person based off of their gender and how they look.

Evidence no. 2:

"But it was still just a costume - the dress, the lipstick, the hair, the body. By the time he started high school in autumn, Andrew had already begun his gender transition." pg. 41

Evidence no. 3:

"They said it was a hate crime, but he had family that wasn't straight... 'We were with 'No H8' but in Richard's case it wasn't hate." pg. 211

Big Idea

IDENTITY

There is always much more to a person beneath the surface level of their character, personality, looks, actions, ~~but~~ the way they express themselves, and what conditions they have.

Evidence no. 4:

"Always smiling, always joking, always goofing around, whether or not it was the time for it." pg. 77

"'Because he was so sweet,' she explained. 'And he's such a young person facing such serious consequences.'" pg. 213

"It just hurt," Cherie said. "Somebody you are that close to... People would say all type of stuff... You're all just trying to put an opinion on something that you don't know. 'Y'all don't know.'" pg. 211

Though people may not know you personally, they spread rumors, call you names, they make assumptions that aren't true.

People who don't know Richard call him a thug, criminal, someone who shouldn't be forgiven. However, people who truly know him say the exact opposite.

- Connects to theme statement, there is always much more to a person than what people think.

Evidence no. 5:

"The crime is very, very, very serious," she explained. "But for some Good Samaritans, Sasha could very well be dead. He lit Sasha's skirt on fire on the bus in the middle of the day and that's very, very disturbing behavior. If the defendant doesn't change and get rehabilitated, he's a very serious person in our society and a real threat to anyone." Pg. 183

Connections

Based off of your actions, regardless of how you truly are, people will be judgemental, but know that those close to you as well as you yourself know who you truly are.

- Relates to "Identity", specifically the struggles a person can face due to assumptions of their identity; how they truly are.

Evidence no. 6:

"I am not a thug, gangster, hoodlum, nor monster. I'm a young African American male who's made a terrible mistake." pg. 199

SUMMARY/REASONING:

Identity is a key idea in "The 57 Bus" because it is reoccurring. With my evidence, you can see that the idea is expressed throughout the whole book no matter the context or conflict. Since it is non-fiction, and about a crime where the victim, Sasha, is a gender and is wearing a skirt as well as the perpetrator being a young African American male that is easy to villainize; people did exactly that. This book demonstrates how judgemental society can be and how the many characters in this book try and deal with that, through these struggles is where the ultimate big idea, "Identity," is expressed.