



(Einstein) Insanity

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Senior Thesis
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(Einstein) Insanity

Thesis essay

As a transgender male with unsupportive parents and limited financial independence, I have encountered numerous struggles in my journey towards self-acceptance. The journey towards accepting one's gender identity can be difficult for anyone, but for individuals like me, it can be even more challenging, especially when parents do not support them.

Throughout my life, I have faced a lot of discrimination and rejection from those around me. Growing up, I always felt out of place, like I did not belong in my own body. It was not until my teenage years that I began to understand that I was transgender. I began to explore my gender identity and found a sense of peace in it.

However, coming out to my parents was not easy. When I first came out to them, they were unsupportive and refused to acknowledge my gender identity. They believed that it was just a phase and that I would grow out of it. As a result, I had to suppress my true identity and present as someone I was not in order to please them.

This suppression led to a lot of internalized pain and anxiety. It was only when I discovered photography that I found a way to express my emotions and experiences.

Through the medium of photography, I aim to capture the emotions and complexities of living in a body that does not align with my gender identity.

With my project, "Einstein Insanity," I hope to raise awareness of the challenges faced by the trans community, particularly in situations where parents may not understand or support their children's gender identity. This project has been a form of therapy for me, allowing me to confront my fears, worries, and dysphoria in a creative and expressive way.

When I began this project, I was uncertain about where to start. However, as I delved deeper into my own experiences, I realized the importance of exploring what it means to be transgender while living with transphobic parents. I began taking pictures of objects that symbolize money, such as banks, grocery stores, and pay stations. These photos inspired me to alter images of money, adding devil horns and black eyes or ripping the bills in half and sewing them back together. I also stacked coins and captured their motion on my desk.

My boyfriend, who is also a transgender male, has been an incredible source of support during this process. Together, we came up with the idea to take a photo of a penny on his nipple, using his surgery scars and the penny to illustrate the connection between money and gender identity.

As the project progressed, I became increasingly anxious about how to keep it a secret from my parents. I considered changing the topic to avoid conflict, but ultimately decided

that I could not live my life for them. This realization allowed me to find peace and continue working on the project with a renewed sense of purpose.

Despite my parents' lack of support, I have found strength in the knowledge that I will soon be moving out and beginning my own journey. This has made working on the project less intimidating, even though my parents may eventually see it. My hope is that this project will make a powerful statement not only for myself but for others in similar situations.

I have found inspiration in the work of other queer and transgender artists, such as Soraya Zaman and their project "American Boys," which captures the trans-masculine community across the United States. Drawing from their work, I took a series of photos of myself wearing a tank top with drawn-on breasts, which I then cut and ripped. This process allowed me to express my feelings towards my parents, who I do not believe will ever accept me for who I am.

In reference to Soraya Zaman's work, as I was looking for inspiration, I came across some of the photos taken in the American boys series, and found myself really attracted to bathtub, and shirtless images, being that it symbolizes being re-born. I took that into consideration, and got the idea to photograph myself in a bathtub with my binder on, facing away from the camera, along with taking some photos of my back while wearing a tank top.

In addition to expressing my own experiences, I hope that this project will help others who are struggling with their gender identity. By creating a space for self-expression and

healing, I aim to encourage others, in the same space I was in, and hope they find a sense of hope in my work.

In conclusion, I hope parents/guardians, of anyone who identifies as trans looks at this work and realizes that this isn't some phase that will go away with time. It's something serious that parents need to stop dismissing whenever their kid comes out to them. My parents always told me they'd love me no matter what happens, I just wish someone would've prepared them for this.

(Reference photos)



Thesis photos



