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There is No Fear in Love

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There is No Fear in Love

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Thank you to my parents who helped me every way they could so I could achieve my dreams.
Your encouragement and support meant the world to me when it felt like giving up.

Thank you to my best friends and roommates for putting up with my crazy stress levels and messes finishing this thing up. Especially Katie for answering my 1,000,000,000,000 questions about ceramics. I truly appreciate your patience with me.

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LGBTQ – The common acronym for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer community. From this point forward in my paper, I will use this acronym when referring to the entire community. Also, note that there could be many more letters added on to this acronym but for the legibility and goal length of the paper, I am keeping the acronym as short and encompassing as I can.

Transgender - an umbrella term that encompasses any gender nonconforming person or person who identifies with the opposite identity of the binary, which they were given at birth. For example a transgender man was born female and he may still identify with the societal binary of “man and woman” by identifying as a man or they may have been born a female but take on a more masculine identity while still remaining gender non-binary. These people may or may not be taking steps to physically alter how they present themselves to the public; they may or may not be taking steps to medically transition (this is when someone technically becomes transsexual but not everyone identifies with this term). In this paper, and often in society, you may hear “transgender” shortened to just “trans.”

Cisgender – a person whose gender identity and biological sex assigned at birth align (e.g., man and male- assigned). This is the opposite of transgender.

Intersex – a person born with a reproductive, genetic, genital, or hormonal make-up that does not easily or can not fit into the male/female binary.

v

Closeted - person who will not or cannot disclose their sex, sexuality, sexual orientation or gender identity to their friends, family, co-workers, or society. There are varying degrees

of being in the closet; for example, a person can be out in their social life, but in the closet at work, or with their family

(Terms partially taken from the University of Central Florida's LGBTQ+ 101)

Artist Statement

When speaking of the Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, Bisexual, and Queer Community, we often think of the Rainbow Flag representing the diverse community and symbol of pride for the oppression we have overcome. However, there is still a huge gap in understanding; the understanding of non-LGBTQ folk as well as understanding within the Queer Community. American Society has built up so many dichotomies in regards to identity:

You are either black or white, you can't be both.

You are either fully able or you are disabled.

You are either gay or straight. If you are bi you are just confused.

You are either male or female there is nothing else.

However, identities are never as black and white as we are told to believe. The grey areas that exist in our own identities are so often ignored, and even worse, we lose a big part of our human experience by ignoring the importance of the identities of others out of fear or ignorance. Through visual insights to human experiences and emotions, I am using conceptual works to show these grey areas and help bring about questions, conversations, and new worldviews of the LGBTQ Community.

Explanation of Title and Show

After lists and lists of adjectives, verbs, and nouns that describe the ideas and pieces in my show, I finally realized:

- 1) That I want my title to be inviting.
- 2) It is okay to use the argument against mine to get people interested.

What do I mean by these? One of the biggest (if not the biggest) arguments against inclusion and diversity of gender, sex, and sexual minorities in the United States, is based on interpretations of scriptures from various religions. It is the fear of the unknown and of change that also keeps the general population unwilling to be open minded. A quick Google search leads me to a few select passages from the Christian Bible about fear and love. 1 John 4:18 seemed to fit the exact ideas I'm striving for. "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love." I see the word "love" in this instance not as romantic love but as acceptance for fellow humans. The punishment the queer community endures through un-acceptance and the denial of our existence has been long running and violent. Why here? Why now? These questions are both simple and complex to answer. My thesis is about me and the things I want people to understand about how I feel and who I am as well as about gender, sex, and sexuality in general. Now, the complex answer is that as a society, here in the U.S., we are starting to embrace the grey areas but there is still such a long way to go in opening more minds. I believe that this long-term change starts with the revelation that the grey areas are as just the same as everyone else. If we start educating and start talking, children (and even closeted adults) will feel safer

and hopefully even one day they will feel that their friends and family will fully accept them. The past decades have started the conversations, which is half the battle but it is time to start exploring solutions to create a fully inclusive society for the gender, sex, and sexually diverse people. I chose to have these conversations visually and intending to spark more questions and conversations by the viewers.

I also intend, through my work, that others will realize just because they do not understand someone does not mean they need to punish them or to make them feel afraid but instead, give a little (or a lot) of understanding, acceptance, and love.

Let's Break it Down: Identities, Binaries, and Our Society

"Society scares easily at those aspects of sensuality that it qualifies as obscene... Interfaces et urinam nascimus (we are born between excrement and urine). (Tschumi, 2013)"

Our western society has become obsessed with labels and categories. The easiest of these divisions is a binary system that can be applied to almost anything. Specifically, let's talk about the binaries that apply to gender, sex, and sexuality: men and women, "natural" and "abomination," heterosexual and homosexual; these labels can help define who we are but for many it takes away the complexity, the layers that make up who we are and how we interact with others (Weeks, 1995, 42-5). They help us identify people like us, people we can relate to, and people with which we have nothing in common. Identities are connected and interact with each other, they can be hard to separate and talk about as singular entities. My piece, *Woven Identities* (images 1 &2) visually represents

how gender, sex, and sexuality are related but separate and work beautifully as a whole.

The current social binary that provides a black and white view of every situation does not allow for the movement and growth of people. It does not allow for people within a category to have their own sub groups because it's "too complicated" and some people do not want to be politically correct. These oppressed groups who do not neatly fit the assigned boxes, the "norms," by the advantaged group is a tale as old as time but it is time to change. It is a necessary trouble to change and adapt to recognize others' identities because it is a way to help our society rethink and evaluate our social and cultural values (Weeks, 1995, 52). This is something I think everyone could agree upon, that we as a society, a fully diverse society, need to look at. We need to evaluate what we want to be the basis of our culture and what we value. Ideally, I would hope that our society values autonomy, relationships and belongingness, and difference and diversity. In addition, we would be constructing an open system that allows for the growth and change needed to keep society productive, happy, and accepting. Unfortunately, with the current climate of people we are a long way from having many of these conversations on a large scale. My thesis is a starting point for some conversations in my own community as it continues to grow at an extraordinary rate.

Sexuality

Sexuality is probably the most unclear, least defined category that humans have messed up for far too long. Like gender, there are possibly as many sexualities as there are people. Every person's experiences build to what turns them on and off, what kinks

they have, and to what general type of people they may be attracted. Easily, a person might identify as gay, but what this means to one person does not mean the same thing to another. A simple example would be talking about the sexual experiences of gay men who are “top,” “bottom,” or “versatile.” All of these men are homosexual but their experiences have led them to different preferences. This is what I am talking about in shades of grey. We could easily go even further into breaking down someone’s sexuality making it even more ambiguous, greyer, if you will: is this “top” aggressive or submissive? Do they have a particular kink? There are so many different questions and answers that a person could give, each different answer leading us to blurred shades in the grey area helping to eliminate the black and white binary that society so clearly thinks is the only thing that exists.

If you would like even more evidence, iO Wright interviewed over 2,000 people for their Self Evident Project. These people identified as LGBTQ and the vast majority of them felt that they fell into a grey area, that they were not 100% the label that they told society they were (e.g. gay, straight, bisexual, etc.) (Wright, 2012). Wright’s Project now has over 9,000 participants and the overwhelming majority of them have continued to say that they fit somewhere in this grey area.

My pieces about sexuality are many genitalia; *Sexuality* (images 13, 14, 15). The pairings, groupings and single pieces represent some of the most common sexualities. I also created an installation, *Guess Who* (image 3) about how everyone judges people based on their actions saying, “oh, they’re so gay,” “she dresses like a lesbian,” or “I totally knew about them, it’s about time they came out.” But can you really judge

someone's characteristics based on who we think they are in the bedroom?

Freud argued decades ago that every human is some degree of bisexual and we are all perverted (Carlson, 2013, p. 302). Now, perversion has gotten a bad rap in my opinion. Perversion just means sexual behavior that most people do not find natural. So Freud is right, in some way most people are perverted because what, exactly, is "natural" and who was able to decide that? Furthermore, Freud set in motion the idea that we start receiving all kinds of social and interpersonal imprinting at a very young age. His theory is that by the time we reach puberty, what turns us on or off and what kinks we have, have been established in our psyches in ways that are hard to change and could possibly be unchangeable (Halberstam, 2012, 85). So how is something that is hardwired in our bodies not natural?

Following Freud's example, Judith Levine, an author and well-known free-speech activist, started pushing the buttons of many people by saying that children are sexual, parents are erotic figures, and sexuality itself is simply the pursuit of pleasure. Levine further proposed that, as adults, we do not understand children and what they want or how they feel; the simplest solution: ask them what feels good and what feels invasive or wrong. Teaching them bodily autonomy early and to not be afraid to seek happiness. We need to stop policing children's sexualities because from one generation to the next, the dynamics of accepting and understanding sexualities has changed. This leads to a gap and misconception of how to interact with others and with themselves (Halberstam, 2012, p. 15).

These ideas are the basis for my piece *Talk early, Talk Often* (image 4). Did I take

it to an extreme? Yes, absolutely, but I wanted the adults viewing my piece to see that it could be as easy as just starting the conversation with children about sex and sexuality at a younger age. I wanted my adult audience to have a laugh but also use the humor they connected with to walk away with them, and have them thinking that there is more that they needed to learn. Otherwise, soon their children could be teaching them about things and people they never dreamed (or cared) to know existed.

Gender

“What if some males are ladies, some ladies are butch, some butches are women, some women are gay, some gays are femme, some femmes are straight, and some straight people don't know what the hell is going on? (Halberstam, 2012, p. 8)”

What is it? It's a social construct based on what “we” agreed was masculine and feminine. I put “we” in quotations because I want to pose a few questions: Do you remember agreeing to these terms and conditions or did you just go along with what you were taught and it felt right? Did you always feel as girly or as manly as your peers growing up? Did they make fun of you for being different? What about now, as an adult, are there things you do that are “sensitive for a guy” or “powerful for a woman?”

I am sure we have all had those moments in our life where we stood out because of our gender; either we embody it to the fullest of what society expects and people have you pegged as a ‘girly girl’ or a ‘manly man.’ OR you are the woman men are

intimidated by or the guy that everyone sees as a sissy. The construction of gender is exclusionary in its binary and it is inhumane to dismiss people based on their percentage of masculinity, femininity, and neutral-ness (Butler, 1993, p. 8).

Just like people change over a lifetime, so can their gender shift. In fact gender is probably the most fluid of the three categories I am discussing. In a recent survey, discussed in National Geographic, thousands of millennials ages 18-34 think that gender is a spectrum and that some even lay outside of the spectrum (Marantz Henig, 2017, 59). There are, without a doubt as many genders as there are people and experiences will lead these people and their genders to shift over time. This is the idea that backs up my piece *Gender* (images 13, 14, 16). The jeans are all different, none of them the same, some similar, but none match exactly. Why jeans? Everyone has worn jeans at some point in their life and it does not matter what department they came from at the store, jeans are jeans. We all have the ones that make us look and feel good and we are happy to wear them. So too, we should be happy and proud to wear our individual genders without shame.

Transgender

“... corpore inclusa, enfleshed, [the body] is not necessarily a trap, but rather the condition of possibility for movement toward one another ... do away with the trap, and we can begin to explore the range of motion inherent in the dynamic prefix trans- (Carter, 2013, 131).”

Because of the recent upswing in the Transgender Rights Movement and because being trans tends to lead to questions from people (often strangers) about gender, sex, and sexuality, I really felt that the continued conversation of what it means to be trans and their rights, was important. The beautiful epitaph really struck me as a good starting place for this conversation. I like this quote because it ties in feelings that many trans individuals share and feelings that shift as they transition but also is a quote that explains how outsiders should look at someone in transition.

First explanation: when many trans individuals come out they do feel as though they are trapped, they want to change but they have been told they could not for so long they do not even know how or where to begin. As they move through the processes, they begin to see more possibilities. After some time, they may even begin to feel just how much they have grown in the range of becoming the person they knew they were and having society see it too.

Second explanation: trans-, the prefix means movement, if we let people move, instead of keeping them trapped in a box they say they do not belong in, we will see movement in our society. If we agree to remove the black and white boxes, people will feel free and safe to move in between the shades of grey to best suit their needs and no one will ever feel trapped. The possibilities become endless.

This quote also ties into my piece *Alex* (images 5 & 6). Alex is shedding their skin to transform into the person with endless possibilities. They are tearing their skin, freeing themselves of societal constraints and moving to be the best Alex they can be. The second piece I created is dedicated to transmen, transwomen, and non-binary folk who

have paid the ultimate price to violence. *#SayTheirNames* (image 7) is to represent the people who have been victims to brutal murders and suicide. Trans individuals, particularly transwomen of color, are at extremely high risk for violence. 2016 was the deadliest year on record for trans individuals in America. That were reported, 27 people were murdered (Abeni, 2017). It's difficult to put a number on just how many committed suicide but 41% of trans individuals report having attempted suicide, that's almost ten times the national average to the general public (Hendershott, 2017). I chose 10 people whose stories stayed with me throughout my time in grad school (2014-17) and used their photos in this memorial installation. Say their names, remember their stories, stop the violence.

Sex

Male and Female, the boxes we are far too often given to choose from on forms. BUT why are we being so limiting? Yes, male and female are the most common sexes in human biology but there are people born with genetic and physical mutations that would put them in the grey area. These people have intersex biology and it is time society has a serious conversation about their inclusion.

The first piece I created about sex, *Sex* (images 13, 14, 17-23), deals with the seven most common genitalia. The pelvises range from male to female with ambiguous genitalia that look like genitals are morphing from one to the other, but this is actually, what some ambiguous genitals look like. I knew I needed to dive deeper into this conversation about intersex justice.

Intersex

While the topic of intersex persons may or may not seem tangential, the conversation on bodily autonomy and acceptance of intersex peoples need to be louder in society. This is why I chose to start the conversation for some, keep the conversation going for others, and make everyone truly aware of how dehumanizing the current state is for many.

The conversation first needs to start with people realizing how common being born with some form of intersex conditions are. Reliable estimates put the number at about 1 in 2,000 babies born with an intersex condition, putting numbers at 1-2% of the world's population. (Stryker, 2008, 9). Those are the same statistics for people born with red hair! Think about it, how many red heads do you know? How many intersex individuals do you know? You probably do not know the answer to that last question do you. My point is this, many people who are born intersex don't know either or don't find out until later in life but it's no one's business except the intersex person's; their body, their business; makes sense, right? Unfortunately, for children born intersex, with ambiguous genitalia, doctors have the right to perform "normalization" surgeries on the baby, sometimes even without the consent of the parents. Understandably, if the infant is unable to void feces or urine, intervention should be a priority but only to achieve the ability to allow for normal bodily functions. The problem comes in when doctors, more often time than not, legally perform surgery without the consent of a parent to "normalize" a baby's genitals because they worry how the child will feel being in a locker room with peers. Until, very recently it seemed they never took into consideration

how (more importantly who) the infant would grow up to be and their sexual function as an adult (Preves 2002, 523-547). Most intersex activism tends to focus on ending "normalization" surgeries. As an advocate for this, I even think that there is more to focus on. Summed up best in this quote by Butler (2004):

The norms that govern idealized human anatomy thus work to produce a differential sense of who is human and who is not, which lives are livable, and which are not ...[it is] part of the continuum of the gender violence that takes lives... the acts of murder must be understood in connection with the coercive acts of "correction" undergone by intersex infants and children that often leave those bodies maimed for life, traumatized, and physically limited in their sexual functions and pleasures. (pp. 4-6)

Why is this systematic oppression allowed to continue? These acts of violence forced on people from young ages; from intersex surgeries, to bullying, hate crimes and even murders; the government has allowed LGBTQ citizens to be treated as second (or lower) class. "The body itself becomes the site of social and political inscription rather than a given biological truth (Betterton 1996, 15)." The government has taken away these peoples' rights to their own bodies, often leading them down a confusing path later in life. A path in which it often takes a long time to find people who understand. This all happens because the government could not face the grey area of sex; they feared the other. This same fear is the fear that keeps many LGBTQ people afraid, hurt, and closeted.

My piece *Doc* (images 8 & 9) deals with a family locked out of the decision to let their child be as they were born. The doctor transforms from the decaying column representing the broken institutions that allow such dehumanizing practices to occur. The doctor has the power to transform this person's life, will he make the right decision.

Politics

We are now more than four decades past the Stonewall Riots, the biggest turning point in the LGBTQ Rights Movement, and most people would report that we are pretty much free, safe and equal. After all, Marriage Equality passed and Don't Ask, Don't Tell was repealed so LGBTQ people can serve openly in the military. But those were the "priority" battles (Bassichis, 2013, 654). The priorities of only some of the LGBTQ community but we should definitely be celebrating all victories. This is why I included my piece *Intertwined* (image 10), because couples who had been in loving committed relationships for years could finally make their union legal and because it gives hope to the next generation who will grow up knowing, they can marry their love without the law standing in the way. However, by now you have realized that there are so many battles left before the war is won for the whole LGBTQ community to be equal.

So what's next if the so-called "priority rights" (i.e. marriage equality and repeal of Don't Ask Don't Tell") have been taken care of? Have you ever heard of the Gay Agenda? The Gay Agenda, according to LZ Granderson, is The Constitution; we just want to be treated like every other citizen. Under the 14th amendment, we should already be protected but we are not, we are second-class and discriminated against (Granderson, 2012). Again, by now, it should be clear, no matter where you fall on the LGBTQ spectrum we all encounter discrimination just because of who we are, and that is not right. It is unconstitutional. It is time we all acknowledge how much the government is controlling the bodies and lives of the LGBTQ community, women, and children.

This is what my piece *Fuck This* is about (image 11 & 12). While it applies to any

person in society telling us we need to conform, some of the images are printed on government documents. From being born to dying, we pay for pieces of paper that our government regulates. To obtain most of these documents, there is so much time, money and other paperwork that has to be completed. The wall morphs into a wave because of how overwhelming and crushing these documents can be, one paper leading to the next. The variety of documents shows how vast, varying and far stretched the government has their hands in the lives of citizens.

Influencing Artists

This section is dedicated to the Artists who have started the conversation on challenging society's views of traditional rolls in gender, sex, and sexuality. I studied their work throughout my time as a graduate student to help understand how they were able to successfully push boundaries and make a statement.

Louis Bourgeois

Bourgeois is well known for her pieces about feminism and personal themes from her childhood. Many of her pieces, especially from the 1960s used male and female genitalia (Art Story 2009). Her following pieces are a few of her works that really helped push the world-view of gender, sex, and sexuality through art.

“Nature Study”1996 (image 24)

An anthropomorphic dog like creature sits with a fully erect phallus, six breasts, and its tail stiffly curled between its legs. It is thin, muscular, and smooth. Its sharp claws give a sense of strength and power but you cannot help but to feel that it is vulnerable

without a head to guide it. Bourgeois stated, “sometimes I am totally concerned with female shapes- clusters of breasts like clouds- but often I merge the imagery – phallic breasts, male and female, active and passive” (Artspace 2015).

This piece creates a sense of unease for many of its viewers because they cannot tell what sex it is but what they fail to see is that Bourgeois created the piece to be a self-reflection of the masculine and feminine characteristics that lie within her.

“Seven in Bed” 2001, (image 25)

Seven figures, some with multiple heads, hold the bodies of their neighbors tightly with interlaced arms. The figures kiss, smile, and seem thoroughly to enjoy the tight bed space they share. The bed lies in a small glass chamber for all to see. I could not find any direct quotes from Bourgeois on this piece but it clearly has masculine and feminine figures enjoying their sexuality. Sarianne Harrison-Sve commented that once again, this is an autobiographical piece of Bourgeois’ memories and perhaps this glass room was meant to represent the secrets humans have but can so easily be seen through. It also shows the viewers things that are familiar and some that are strange but all of the feelings are feelings that lie somewhere in every human. (Art Story 2009).

"Maternal Man" 2008 (image 26)

Archival dyes stain the cloth in an x-ray like image of a male figure impregnated with a fetus. The lines and curves of the figure are soft and the colors are pinks, which suggest femininity, but the semi erect penis presses you to understand the masculinity of the figure (Parkett, 2008).

While I failed to find any personal information on this piece, I will assume that once again the piece is a symbolic reflection of Bourgeois. At the time the piece was created, from before it was made and through till today, it is an interesting look at how the idea of “Mr. Mom” can now be a reality for trans men to conceive and bare children. Also, single parents taking on the role of mom and dad, being the traditional masculine and feminine household rolls.

Robert Gober

Gober is an artist that takes every day, familiar objects and human body parts to put them in uncomfortable scenarios and places for the viewer. His pieces and installations are meant to tell a story. Often these stories are about his experiences of living outside the “norm” but he also works to bring to light other stories dealing with childhood, sexuality, religion, or discrimination (Astrup Fearnley Museet).

"Untitled" 1990 (man/woman pillow) (image 27)

In the corner of the room a sack slumps. This sack, upon closer examination is a realistic torso that has the characteristics of a male and female. It is made with beeswax and real human hair so the eeriness of its likeness to a disembodied human as well as its non-threatening appearance of a pillow makes the viewer feel both disturbed but welcomed. The gender and sex of this person has very clearly been questioned but Gober has asked his viewers to attempt to not categorize or make assumptions about the body (Artspace 2015)

Erik Ravelo

Ravelo is an artist who has dedicated his career to Social Justice, change, and acceptance. Ravelo's works depict a world ready to fight for the world they wish to live in. One created in love, full of diversity, accepting and loving beings.

"Lana Sutra Series" 2011 (image 28)

A series of fifteen sculptures, these couples wrapped in colored cores engage in sexual positions celebrating love. The connection of the two bodies' differently colored cords mixing and braiding beautifully signifies the diversity of humankind coming together in a natural, single thread (Fabricante.) These pieces were made to lead the way in accepting the diversity of sexuality.

"Gay Pride Series" 2014 (image 29)

A series of photos picture a gathering of hundreds of people from all over the world on Moscow's Red Square in front of the Kremlin and St Basil's Cathedral. They came to show their love and unite to fight the anti-gay state of Russia all while celebrating in the traditional Gay Pride garb (or lack thereof), dancing, and generally showing their sexual diversity in a state that prohibits this. The anonymous man that started this movement stated, "I fell in love with the world that day. There was only love." The movement grew to be in collaboration with the United Nations Department of Public Information as well as other international organizations.

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Technical Addendum

SEX (images 17-23)

I covered found foam tubes, cut them in half, and covered them with clay to form the pelvis and genitals of a person. Then I made plaster/silica mold. I used the mold for base of next person. Next, modifying the clay person as necessary to make another plaster/silica mold.

Original intentions of making the genitals out of glass failed but the fragility of the clay still works with my goal. So I pressed a slab of clay (3/5) of an inch thick into the previously made molds let dry to just before “leather hard,” added ribs to the inside for stability, and took out of the mold to modify and finish drying.

I used epoxy, pipe fittings, and wire to hang the pelvises.

GENDER (image 16)

I posed and stiffened jeans with Aquaform – 8+ thick coats. Fill in all undercuts carefully with wax. Make plaster mold. 2 inches thick on every side. Fill in holes with plaster, water, and wood glue mixture to fix mold.

Tested 3 types toilet paper with 3 release agents: Cottonelle with Murphy’s Oil Soap, Angel Soft with Turtle Wax, and Charmin Ultra Strong Paraffin Wax. Cottonelle with Murphy’s Oil Soap gave the best results in visual texture and tactile texture, as well as in durability. This process was not yielding clear or sturdy products so I tried creating the following paper mache type product:

- 2 cups of wet toilet paper
- 1 cup regular joint compound the premixed stuff and not Dap brand
- 3/4 cups Elmer's glue
- 3/4 cups flour
- 2 drops of bleach

Mix WELL.

Helpful hints:

Having issues drying/releasing ... ME TOO! Made an "oven" that consists of a shelving unit wrapped in insulation, with a dehumidifier inside, covered in a tarp.

Mold too heavy – find a place where you can set it and leave it with little movement. This will also help reduce the risk of the repaired cracks re-cracking.

Wouldn't release well in the thick areas – added more Murphy's

Cast kept splitting – added in cheesecloth to act as rebar and hold it all together.

Also doubled the thickness of the cast.

Cast too thick and didn't want to dry – drill tiny holes in the mold so that the moisture can escape and the dehumidifier can suck the water out of those areas more easily.

Finally, when all of the above failed to meet me expectations (although I learned a lot) I went to getting people to donate real jeans. In total, I collected 82 jeans. Sprayed them with either Aquaform or Elmer's glue (yes, the white liquid you used in grade school. It's the only other product that even came close to comparing.) When everything was dry, I spray-painted them all varying shades of black, white, and grey.

SEXUALITY (image 15)

Many research images later, I sat down and began to carve genitalia from chunks of clay. A few of the penis I threw on the wheel. I tested some glazes, many did not work and my advice is when in doubt just use under glaze and clear glaze. I made 35 penises, 36 vaginas, and 14 anuses.

FUCK THIS (image 11 & 12)

I collaged government documents to print onto. I drew an image, transferred it onto wood, cutout the image in the wood, and then coated the wood in polyurethane. I ran the woodcut and collaged paper through the press. I then printed many more pages through the press to be able to fill in the big collage. I sewed prints into a big wave shaped piece of fabric, painted it with polyurethane and suspended it from the frame I made for it. The frame was made of wood supports and conduit shaped like the arch of the wave.

Doc (images 8 & 9)

I welded a rebar armature. Made column and body armature out of chicken wire. Plaster bandaged the column, covered it in my "goop" mixture (listed above), and made a refining and skin coat out of dry wall putty. I crated the flutes by cutting the negative shape out of a piece of cardboard and dragging it up and down the column. I sanded the piece to smooth out the texture. I polyurethane and painted it. I then formed the head and coated that with a rubber spray coat, I dressed the figure and worked of the

accompanying components. The parents are modified plaster casts of figures I worked on earlier in grad school. (pro tip: wood glue added to your plaster mixture is your friend.) The baby I carved out of clay in an afternoon and went through the bisque and glaze process. The scales of justice are carefully found items from thrift and hardware stores. I glued it together and painted it all to match. The plates for the scales were made with extra plaster from other projects. I made casts of Mike's hands to use. The final touch was painting the plates and hands as well as dressing the figure.

ALEX (images 5 & 6)

I made a wood and chicken wire armature, covered it in plaster bandages the layered on plaster. I was able to chisel away parts. The pose I chose and the heavy plaster made for an unstable statue. I abandoned this piece for two semesters until I was able to find another pose that I was happy with and another material that would make Alex easier to maneuver. I found that the product described above was perfect and I quickly fell in love with it as it was lightweight, allowed for alterations once dry, and was easy to layer. The only con is that the drying time, with the aid of a dehumidifier, was 8-24 hours. I also added a skin layer of drywall putty and used garbage bags to create the peeling skin. I carefully took a lighter to the plastic bags to alter its appearance. I added another layer of drywall putty around the plastic to add to the effect of tearing, bulging skin. Painted it all to blend and/or contrast the way I wanted.

INTERTWINED (image 10)

I collographed the lace background, wood cut the image of the hands, and screen-printed the braid and the rings.

TALK EARLY, TALK OFTEN (image 4)

This took weeks of research and playing with words to find the right combination. Printed out Chalkboard font in the writing I wanted, baby oiled the paper, cut them out, and printed the “chalk” on paper and on a metal sheet so that the magnets would stick. Sprayed with a protective coat to prevent scratching. Built frame for metal and put the letter magnets on the piece.

#SAYTHEIRNAMES (image 7)

In designing the 3D aspects of this piece, I drew my inspiration from the memorials of fallen Trans men and women. I have a shroud and built eight boxes to hold the candles and picture frames. I painted the boxes black with silver tops to illuminate the point.

GUESS WHO? (image 3)

I found objects that would fit a bedroom. The installation is meant to show that you can't know who someone is based on their bedroom alone or how they act. What happens in their bedroom is no one's business but that person's.

WOVEN IDENTITIES (image 1)

I bought 16 yards of muslin to create a mock sculpture and to then have a pattern for the final piece. On black, white, and grey canvas (4 yards long each), I printed one pattern per color of canvas. I used electrical conduit, pool noodles, and 60 pounds of polyester stuffing to create the structure and filling of the piece.

Helpful tools included: a small sharp knife, a conduit bender, an angle grinder with a cutting blade, a LOT of duct tape, the patience of a saint, and the upper body strength of Mr. Universe.

Images

In order by the following:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 - Woven Identities | 16 - Gender |
| 2 - Woven Identities close up | 17 - Sex (female) |
| 3 - Guess Who? | 18 - Sex (androgynous 1) |
| 4 - Talk Early, Talk Often | 19 - Sex (androgynous 2) |
| 5 - Alex front | 20 - Sex (androgynous 3) |
| 6 - Alex back | 21 - Sex (androgynous 4) |
| 7 - #SayTheirNames | 22 - Sex (androgynous 5) |
| 8 - Doc front | 23 - Sex (male) |
| 9 - Doc back | 24 - Nature Study, Bourgeois |
| 10 - Intertwined | 25 - Seven in Bed, Bourgeois |
| 11 - Fuck This | 26 - Maternal Man, Bourgeois |
| 12 - Fuck This close up | 27 - Untitled 1990, Gober |
| 13 - Gender/Sex/Sexuality Wall 1 | 28 - Lana Sutra, Ravelo |
| 14 - Gender/Sex/Sexuality Wall 2 | 29 - Gay Pride |
| 15 - Sexuality | |



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

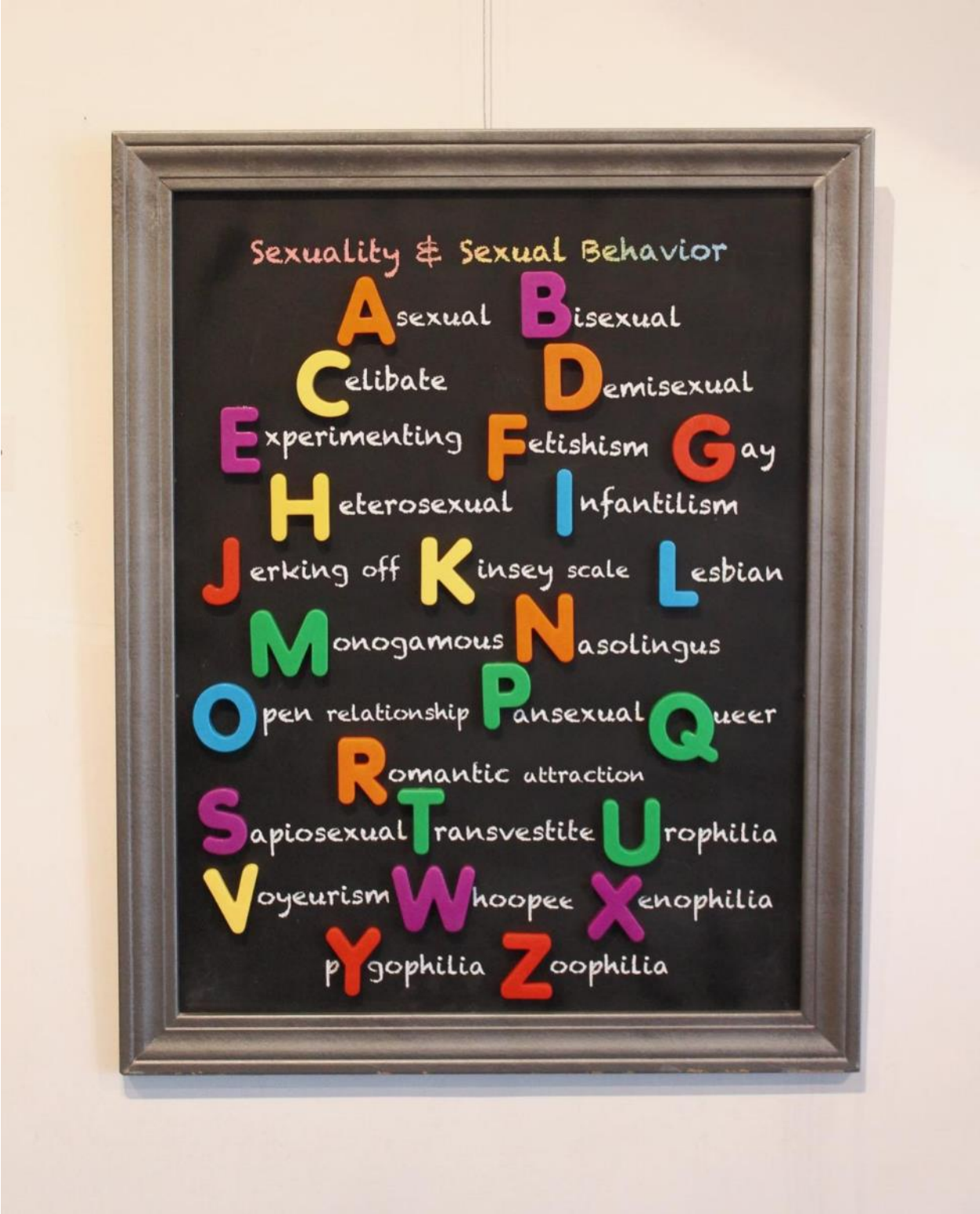


Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10



Figure 11



Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14



Figure 15



Figure 16



Figure 17



Figure 18



Figure 19



Figure 20



Figure 21

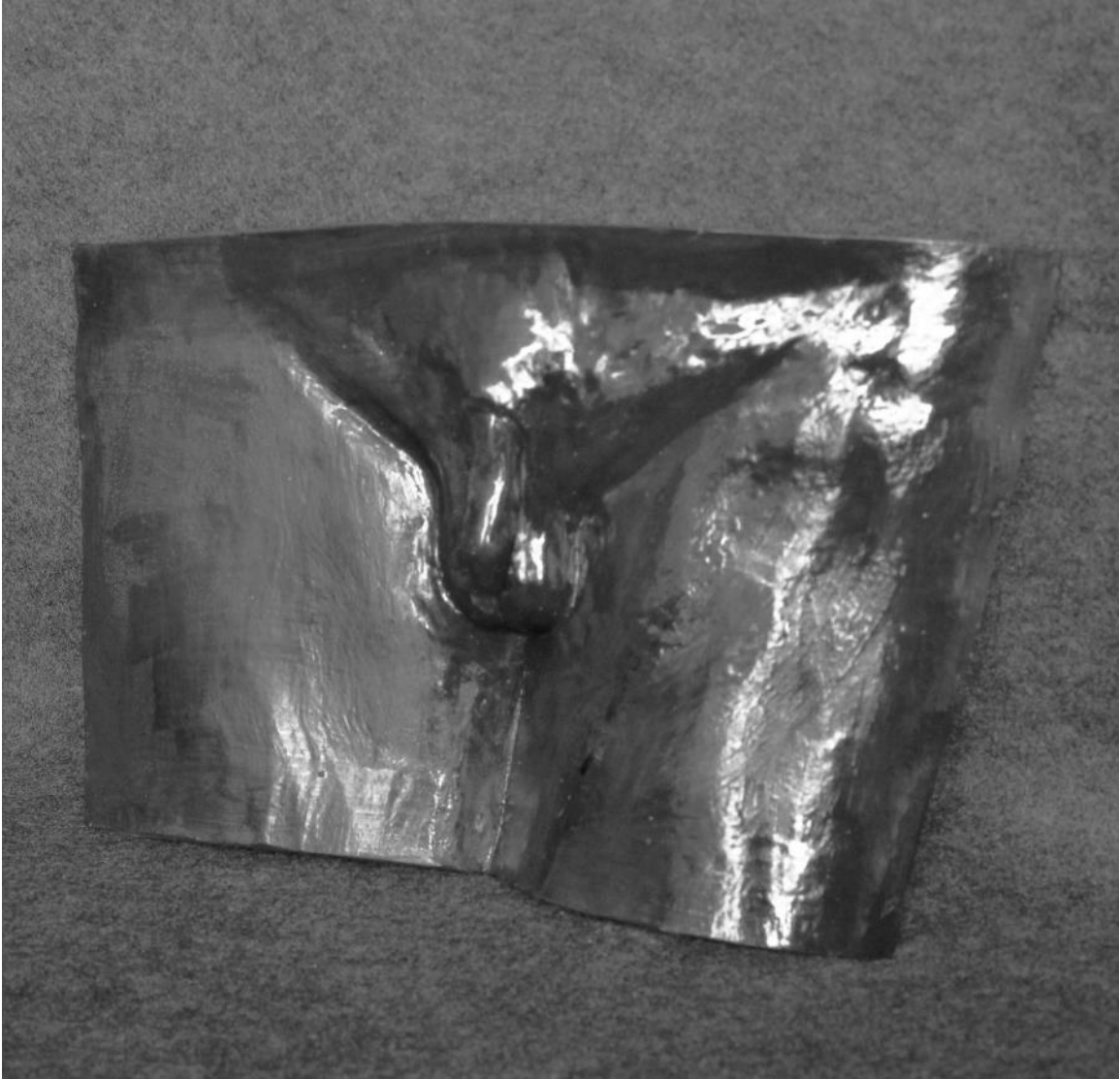


Figure 22



Figure 23



Figure 24



Figure 25



Figure 26



Figure 27



Figure 28



Figure 29