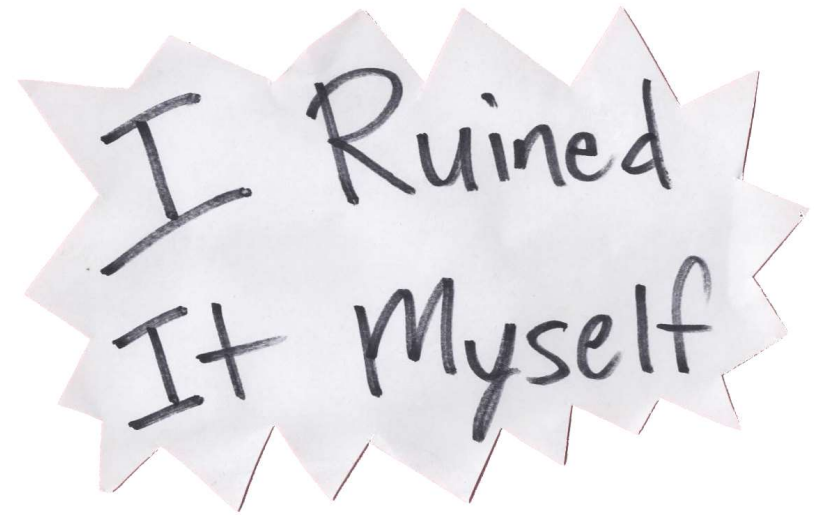


With appreciation for the following publications which have inspired and informed this one:

- *The Transfeminist Manifesto*, Emi Koyama
- *Transgender Studies Quarterly* (various)
- *Cruising Utopia*, José Esteban Muñoz

And for my queer community in and around Seattle, whose creativity uplifts and inspires me constantly, and that collectively lends me the space and courage to be who I am in a world that longs to dissolve us.



a trans
punk
manifesto

I have ruined this body.

ruin 1 of 2 **verb**

ru·in ('rū-ən) -,in; 'rūn

transitive verb

1 a : to damage irreparably

I have taken a perfectly good male specimen and debased it. I have neutered it and rendered it impotent and powerless. I have desecrated its genitalia and divorced them from their male role. The body is sterilized; it is incapable of heterosexual reproduction and the capitalist logic of the nuclear family, and can only have sex for the sin of pleasure.

I have made it imperfect, unhealthy; wrong. It is not a failure of maleness, and there are many of those – the nerds, the incels and the “alpha males” to-be, idolizing masculinity but seen as incapable of successfully filling the male role and undesirable in their failure at it. Transsexualism is instead an *active and willed* rejection of the logic of cisgenderism – a rejection of what one is born to be and what one must naturally aspire to. My transition was especially bothersome for my parents, seeing me as succeeding in these fields and then choosing to reject them – that I was able to be male and then chose not to be. And the transsexual body will also never be the opposite sex. It will never be fertile, I will never reproduce. I am destined, and in fact aiming, for a failure state – unable to return to maleness, and never fully capable of embodying a binary femaleness.



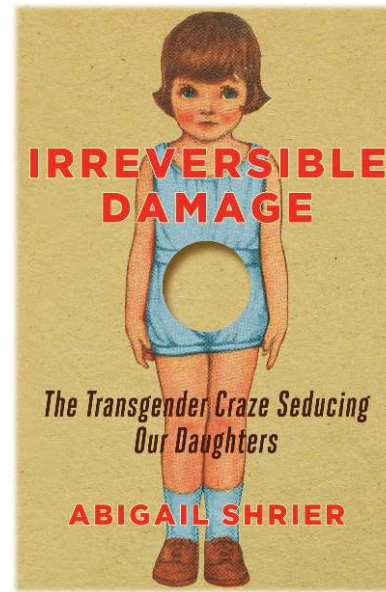
I keep a right-to-repair for my body, and more importantly cling to a right-to-ruin. Because god knows that to be “repaired” in the sentiments of society entails not just the impossibility of detransition, but preferably the invisibility of death.

Trans suicide rates are repeated, repeated, repeated – not just for stigmatization, but to remind us that once one has willingly abandoned the path of the cissexual, true return is impossible, and the preferable way out is death.

When I cut my own hair, hacking at it sloppily with shears and clippers, it lacks the precision and skill of a trained stylist, but not the intention. There is a vision – taken not from style magazines or from popular fashions, but from my own vision to reshape my image and to self-maintain this body of mine, this vessel in which I sail rougher seas. It looks rougher, coarser; and I can happily say that I ruined it myself. My body is the site of expression – messy, imprecise, and often lacking in skill and mechanical precision – but an expression of desire not to consume, and not to partake, in the politics of desirability from cissexual society; to lean into their aspersions and degradations of the cross-gendered and mutilated forms.

Emphasizing transfeminine embodiment, Zackary Drucker's confrontational video and performance art approaches "error" as a framework of transgressive desire and antinormativity. Her film *You will never, ever be a woman. You must live the rest of your days entirely as a man, and you will only get more masculine with each passing year* (2008) aggressively reroutes and displaces transphobic rhetoric designating transfemininities as bad copies of cis femininities by showing two transwomen whose insults at each other culminate in sex.

"Error"; Yetta Howard, *Keywords*, *Transgender Studies Quarterly* Vol. 1



Some small proportion of the population will always be transgender. But perhaps the current craze will not always lure troubled young girls with no history of gender dysphoria, enlisting them in a lifetime of hormone dependency and disfiguring surgeries. If this is a social contagion, society—perhaps—can arrest it.

This body will be burned, this body will be scarred, this body will be mine. This body will be forcibly molded into the image that I choose for it; and it will grow with me. My body is proof that the logics of cissexism are not incontrovertible – it follows my will and grows and shifts in the ways that I want it to, in spite of insistence on the impossibility of escaping a maleness forcibly assigned at birth and reiterated

for every second of my childhood and adolescence.

Health Summary

Use the tabs to open a section of your Health Summary.

Current Health Issues

Medications Allergies Im

Please review your health issues and verify that the list is

Transgenderism

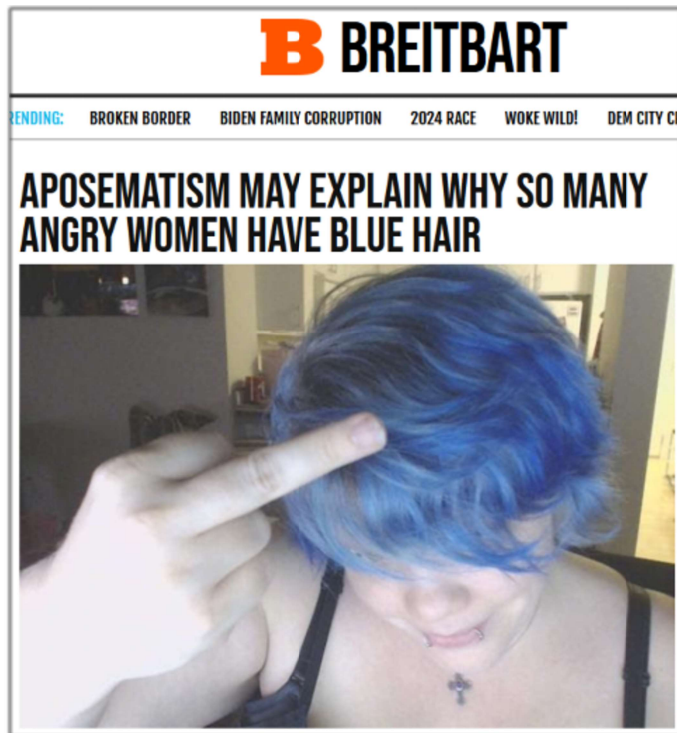
Added in last appointment

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I take garbage and I rebuild it, and I take the intact and I destroy it. I take the unwanted and I display it with pride, on my body or in my space. I fish a jacket out of dumpsters or the thrift bins, and cut the sleeves off and then pin them back on for the winter; to disassemble the form and make it modular rather than intact. I bleach my jeans and my tops, and stitch them into a patchwork monstrosity; asymmetrical, off-balanced, with the bleach-eaten fabric lending itself to rips and tears.

To many of them, you will no longer be "the guy who made Eagle Scout," "the guy who voted Most Likely to Succeed," "the guy who got a perfect score on his SATs," "the guy who got into Dartmouth," or "the guy who volunteers at the soup kitchen." You'll be "the guy who became a chick." It's entirely possible, maybe likely, that everything else you've achieved will be overshadowed in their eyes.

Emails from a former father.



aposematism noun

ap·o·sem·a·tism (a-pə-'se-mə-ti-zəm)

zoology

: the use of a signal and especially a visual signal of conspicuous markings or bright colors by an animal to warn predators that it is toxic or distasteful : **WARNING COLORATION**

My messy hand-stitching lacks the neatness and the invisibility of the machines of the factory; but it's mine, it shows the shakiness of my hands and the uncertainty of my approach. It molds to my body as an extension and reflection of my ethos. What I want to wear looks worse, and it is mine. Or it comes from my community – it comes from other trans artists who are taking things apart and stitching them back together, who are creating something new and transgressive, and who are disassembling and deconstructing male clothes and female clothes and the ideas behind them, and stitching them together and making something new and in their own ideals.