

Scholarship Essay Example Financial Need

"Oh well look at that one," my uncle leans over and says about my brother-in-law in the living room wearing a dress. "I'd always had my suspicions about him," he jokes with a disapproving sneer and leans back in his chair, a plate of Southern-style Christmas dinner in his hand.

I was hurt. Why would my own uncle say that like it's such a terrible thing that my brother-in-law is wearing a dress? That it was the worst thing in the world if my brother-in-law were gay or effeminate.

"I think he looks beautiful," my oldest brother Ethan chimes in. At that moment, I wish I could have hugged Ethan. No, not because he was defending my brother-in-law (who actually isn't gay, as my uncle was suggesting), but because Ethan was defending me. My uncle has no idea that I recognized earlier this past year that heterosexuality wasn't meeting all of my needs for intimacy with other people and that I've come to define myself as queer. It all started when I took a hard look at how my upbringing in Miami had taught me that the only way that boys are supposed to connect with others is by having sex with "beautiful" girls – that intimacy with other guys or "ugly" girls isn't as meaningful.

After freeing up that block in my brain that told me that I shouldn't look at guys in a certain way, I could embrace the fact that I'm attracted to men (and people in general) in a lot of different, new ways. My growth as a person was exponential. I rewrote so many areas of my life where I didn't do things I wanted because of social conditioning. Within two months, my world expanded to include polyamory. I looked back on my past relationship with my girlfriend and realized that I wasn't jealous (angry, yes. hurt, yes. But not jealous) when she cheated on me. I realized that people's needs — whether they are for sex, someone to talk to, someone to engage intellectually — don't necessarily all have to be met with one person. It can be easier sometimes with one person, absolutely. But that's not the only way. As someone who is both polyamorous and queer, I feel like parts of my family and large parts of my community marginalize me for being different because society has told them to. I want to change that.