
"THE GIRL WITH THE HUGE HAIR"

Author Andie MacDonald is a person comfortable in her own skin—and hair. Many students could use her essay as a model. She makes her hair into a metaphor, with its two layers representing two sides of her personality. It helps that she is funny, as when sharing that after waking up, she looks like she has “just been mauled overnight by a large bear.” The essay’s charm lies in the fact that she has embraced a trait that would make others self-conscious. Writes Andie, “I had started out writing some really serious essays about things I had done, but they were all coming out really cliché (which was frustrating) so I just started writing really random things. I have big hair and people always remember me as ‘the girl with the big hair.’”

Essay by Andie MacDonald

I can’t imagine wanting straight hair. People suggest it all the time, but I simply could never change my hair. It’s a part of my identity, part of the reason people remember me. You see, it’s not your ordinary hair—it’s HUGE. And I’m not just talking curly; I’m talking mega frizzy and tangled. But no matter how difficult it is to manage, I would never get rid of it because my hair defines who I am.

The bottom layer is actually fairly straight and smooth. It’s orderly, predictable and easy to manage, kind of like a part of me. I’m organized. Never mind that my room may be completely covered with piles of clothes. Still I can always find my favorite pink t-shirt or that last Harry Potter book. Maybe my room is the epitome of organized chaos. That bottom layer of hair is calm, not too frizzy, again, relaxed like me. I’ve always been one to chill, maybe watch a movie rather than stay out prowling till unprecedented hours of the morning.

The top layer of my hair is oh so different. It spikes like crazy; it puffs as if the laws of physics didn’t apply to certain renegade

strands. Actually it's crazy and unpredictable, kind of like another part of me. I've always had a creative, somewhat impulsive streak, whether it was inventing games to play with my brother or building a tower with ketchup-cups from McDonald's. I absolutely love to make things. When I was eight, one of my birthday presents was a huge box of tape and string of assorted types and colors. I was so blissfully happy with those simple, but magical "art supplies." I used it all within a few days making various tape contraptions which even blocked the stairs. I'm creative. I'm unpredictable, just like my hair. I like to try new things, to extend into new directions like that renegade curl refusing to lay flat.

Without a shower in the morning and copious amounts of gels and mousse, I look like I've just been mauled overnight by a large bear. But actually I'm ok with chaotic hair. It's me; it's wild, crazy, and unpredictable, and yet with care, creativity and effort, it can actually be tamed, organized. Trust me. People remember me because of my hair. That's exactly who I am. I'm me, Andie MacDonald, the girl with the HUGE HAIR.

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Andie MacDonald attends Duke University.