

## **Euphoric, Dysphoric**

I seek out euphoria in everything--But dysphoria has no difficulty finding me; if only euphoria sought me out in the same manner! Is it unfair to wish for only the sweets in life, and leave the bitters behind? In this artwork, I chose to focus on these two states of mind—their fluid characteristics and differing impacts on an individual, as well as the ability of maintaining a healthy balance between them. I wrote four fictional short stories that each embody these emotions through different lenses.

In these prints, I chose to capture an aspect of each story and combine them into an abstract composition. The prints I created are known as “reductive” prints; each new layer is carved from the same linoleum block, so by the end of the print the block is almost completely carved, leaving a printer unable to reprint the edition. I chose this method because of the risk in the process, as well as a means to properly portray the fleeting state of euphoria and dysphoria; the ephemerality of the block mirrors how momentary these emotions can be. The color combinations of each print reflect the multitude of ways emotions can influence an experience; the more appealing color combinations represent euphoria, and the opposite for dysphoria. The only colors that have a strict definition are the final layers: gold and black. The black serves as a sort of foundation for the imagery; it does not glorify the setting, but merely grounds it as an image. The gold represents influence, or power, of euphoria and dysphoria; it glorifies the intensity of the setting, and creates a more fantastical presence than black. In moments of intense euphoria or dysphoria, initially minuscule reflections are brought to their extremes.

Finnian D.  
California

# The Playful Exchanges One Experiences Between Euphoria & Dysphoria

Finnian D.



*This paper addresses euphoria and dysphoria; how they coexist, how they shape each other, as well how one can embrace and learn from them. I intend to delve into all possible characteristics and impacts of these two emotions, as well as attempt to explain them. The countless forms that these two can take allows for a proper pondering of the experiences altogether. My own experiences cannot encompass the entire world of these emotions, but my own experiences in their certainty are applied when possible.*

I seek out euphoria in everything, searching inside myself, as well all around me. But dysphoria has no difficulty finding me; if only euphoria sought me out in the same manner! Is it unfair to wish for only the sweets in life, and leave the bitters behind? But is that really what I desire? As appealing as a more constant feeling of euphoria sounds, it's important for me to understand how detrimental it could be to my mental health. If euphoria graced me with its presence at the same rate dysphoria did, I'd surely take it for granted. I'd become apathetic towards its beauty, and eventually disregard it altogether. The same principle can be applied towards dysphoria; each sentiment has its recommended dose. By striking a balance between the two, I can learn to appreciate each interaction with euphoria - and, perhaps eventually, dysphoria. This concept is seemingly simple in theory, but devastatingly difficult in practice. There's a certain skill in appreciating both euphoria and dysphoria as well as determining negative euphorias and positive dysphorias. These stem from the idea that not every instance of euphoria is necessarily beneficial to your well-being, and not all dysphoria is negative. The qualities of either emotion are interchangeable, and rely on outer forces for a proper distinction.

The lenses through which the two emotions are experienced characterize the positive or negative attributes and outcome of either. Lenses can also affect how we perceive whichever emotion we're presented with, generally producing an extreme of that sensation. Nostalgia is an example of an incredible bias in terms of accurately representing a memory; if you recall a certain moment in your life fondly, you may remember a more intoxicating sense of euphoria, and when reflecting on an unfavorable memory, a stronger sense of distress is usually present. As for positive dysphoria, the lines are blurrier. It's harder to find examples in the lives of others; I can never fully understand what another individual is going through. However, in the cases regarding my own life, I've used the emergence from states of dysphoria to create a newfound appreciation of things I would otherwise consider irrelevant. Being in a state of dissatisfaction for an extended amount of time can make the long awaited reunion with satisfaction ten times better. While the feelings of both euphoria and dysphoria may remain constant, the context and results define whether they're considered positive or negative. The ability to distinguish positive euphoria from negative euphoria as well as dysphoria likewise is crucial for self-maintenance. Lacking this ability leads to mental decay, and can even impact a surrounding environment. The most prevalent form of mental decomposition by ignorance is the case of addiction. Regardless of the consequences, an addict will continue to use a substance for the state of euphoria it induces. Another necessity for proper self-maintenance is the ability to grow from either state of the two emotions. The overexposure of either emotion can shape an individual in a negative way, so finding a balance between the two is vital.

## The Ritual

A small boy stood in his lush backyard, his fresh, red toy car in hand. His blonde locks curled atop his head, reflecting the sun (in the coming years, his hair would straighten and darken itself into a burnt mahogany, with only the occasional highlight in remembrance of what once was). He wore a plain white shirt, recently adorned with breadcrumbs and beads of jelly from his lunch, as well as amber stains of apple juice. As far as pants go, the child had found more comfort in a lack of them entirely. Whether or not he was too old to be running around half-naked was an insignificant conflict to him (he was not).

The battered corpses of once pristine toy cars laid at his feet in neat rows alongside the designated smashing rocks eager to fulfill their destiny. He set the car down on a slab of granite

established as the formal smashing spot, and grasped one of the eager rocks. As he lifted his small arm, the entire backyard cheered him on.

“Smash it!” called the irises.

“Crush it to pieces!” buzzed the dragonflies, as they whizzed by his ears.

Multiple grape hyacinths orchestrated a cheering “(1...2...3...) You can do it!”

The ladybugs gathered in anticipation, snacking on equally entranced (at least enough to ignore being eaten alive) aphids. The whole yard seemed to hold its breath as the giant brought down his heaving boulder upon the minuscule automobile, and with the first strike the habitat in its entirety rejoiced.

Small frogs leaped in victory from one blade of grass to the next, and the grass cheerfully assisted in launching the frogs even further. The bees flew in unison, performing a triumphant dance their queen had choreographed for them (synchronized flying, if you will). With each crash of the stone against the folding aluminum came waves of celebration. The greenery was flooded with cheers of joy and praise for the powerful young boy.

The boy was specific in his manner of smashing; he made sure to evenly crush all sides of the car, for his intention was not just to obliterate. This was not a mindless act of destruction, but rather an intentional pimping of this miniature ride, and the boy found immense delight in it. Once he deemed the car had been mangled to perfection, he set it down amongst the others.

The boy basked in the beauty of the arrangement in front of him. His collection was almost complete (whatever that meant, his goal was unclear). He grabbed the recent addition in one hand, as well as the all-time favorite in the other, and extended both hands forward onto the grass, so that they faced each other. The boy was transported to his favorite imaginary stadium, with a waiting audience and a complete blackout (for sake of theatrics). His outfit transformed into his favorite imaginary sequined and tiger-striped suit (pants included).

Microphone in hand, the boy let out a bellowing, “Ladies and Gentleman! Welcome to my famous crazy legendary DEMOLITION DERBY!”

The lights came on, and the audience (naturally) went wild.

This was his routine. Whenever he was given a new toy car, he would smash it in the appropriate backyard spot. He would then face the newest addition against all of the other previously smashed cars, in a more gladiator-style battle rather than a traditional demolition derby. He wouldn’t have known this, though; he was only allowed to watch T.V. in small doses, and naturally he could never manage to see the entire demolition derby. He had managed glimpses, though, and this was enough to let his imagination run free.

His mother always misinterpreted this as mindless smashing, and would eventually stop giving him toy cars (this was alright, by then his collection would be complete).

“I will not tolerate this type of mindlessness!” She used to bark, but the boy felt no need to explain himself.

What he experienced with his toys was unique to him, and he could not put together a formidable defense for his case (both due to the intangible experience, as well as his limited vocabulary).

## The Show

He stood in front of the band, starry-eyed and jelly-legged, frothing with admiration, surrounded by bodies that he could only assume mirrored his sentiments. Whether or not they actually did was irrelevant and obsolete to him; he was bathing in unadulterated bliss. Each strum of the strings on both guitars snaked their way through the cords, exploding out of the

amps and crashing into his awaiting eardrums. Each strike of the snare, each thud of the kick, and each crash of the cymbals rattled the musk around him, and reverberated in his skull. The bass buzzed up from his toes, through his head and out of his fingertips. It was as if he was living every feel-good end scene from every heart-throb romance movie he'd ever seen, with the couple being him and the soundwaves.

The hardwood floors—turned glassy by the numerous drinks that had been spilled throughout the show—reflected the stage lights above him, and brought back memories of his favorite night sky. Inside the venue it was about six degrees warmer than outside, and possessed a humidity vaguely similar to that of the amazon. He was not quite drenched in sweat, but his shirt definitely gripped him a bit tighter than normally, and his face definitely shined a bit brighter than normally. He bounced around the center of the crowd, where space had been made to allow for a proper collision zone for the show. The ones that partook in this form of dance exchanged energies continually through each impact, creating a spinning ball of electricity in the center of the mass. This continued all the way through the climax of the song, and had certainly taken a toll on him by the time the final note hit. His body temperature had certainly increased since the past song, and was verging closer to the drenched category—he had accumulated not only more of his own sweat, but the perspiration of others. The venue was silent in between songs, but he could still make out the crackling from the surplus of energy expelled during the dance. It was not long before the beginning of the next song omitted him from hearing the sizzle, and had to instead absorb the energy through his other senses.

He had seen the set list—written haphazardly in sharpie on a crumpled piece of paper by the vocalist's foot—towards the beginning of the show, so he knew that the song that played marked halfway through their set. This halfway song was one of the band's mellower songs, allowing the gathering to cool off after the past two more intense songs. There was a tangible must of bodies in the air, which carried an acquired taste only favorable to the gathering that had created it. His body swayed in sync with almost everyone around him, with the exception of one man who had decided the best way he would experience the concert was by being intoxicated past comprehension.

The man had started drinking considerably heavily, early into the show, and had already surpassed his limit before the opening band had even finished. By the time the headlining band had finished their first song, it wasn't even apparent if he knew where he was. It was a humble crowd, so his movements had more of an impact on the people around him; in order to avoid a consistent interference, the group moved around him as molecules of water would around a drop of oil. He somehow managed to stay upright, with his head hung below his groin and his legs straight, but the physics behind it seemed impossible. His arms dangled on either side of his hunched body, swinging with no apparent intention. Every now and again his head would slightly lift as he'd tried to say something, but whatever would come out was immediately lost in the noise around him. At the end of the song marking halfway, he crumpled onto the slick ground beneath him, breaking his empty bottle in the process.

His face slowly slid across the floor, until gravity had pulled his body into a position that seemed more physically possible. The shards of glass littered the ground around him, and he contributed to the array of liquids on the floor with the drool that slowly seeped from his mouth. The shattering of the bottle had been so perfectly timed in between songs that not even the ringing in the front row's ears could mask it, and the entire attention of the venue slowly made its way to the heap on the floor. The front man of the band gingerly spoke into the microphone, with the same voice that had made the audience swoon just moments ago, but this time with no

raw emotion. He requested a halt of the show, just long enough to safely remove the drunk man and sweep up as much glass as possible.

Initially they faltered, but as he continued to expectantly gaze at the crowd, they slowly became animated and very quickly dealt with the mess at hand. While he was glad that the audience was so understanding and appreciated their efforts to work quickly, he was still agitated by the disruption and had decided to leave out a secret song that the band usually played for their best crowds. It was one of his favorite songs to perform, not only because of the nature of its rarity, but he also just loved the melody. This crowd had, in fact, been on track to receive the special performance, but the drunk had become the deal breaker.

\*\*\*

It's important for an individual to maintain the ability to decipher and interpret the lenses that mold their euphoria and dysphoria. Lenses are an incredibly influential aspect of these emotions, but they aren't the only important defining factor; the method of inducement has the same importance. Different ways of inducing these feelings can determine the relationship one has with the emotions, as well as the characteristics of it. The lens determines how one will perceive certain sensations, but the sensation is only present because of an inducing force. If a wave of dysphoria follows only after euphoria, is that instance of it necessarily negative? Or is just that a natural process? There are a large number of ways that either feeling can be induced, all of which plot across the entirety of the spectrum of positivity and negativity.

Exercise-induced euphoria is one these methods, and while it is fairly common in specifically aerobic exercise, it can be found through other forms of exercise as well. For example, experiencing a "runner's high" is a form of this and the act of continual runs can be very beneficial for an individual's physical and mental health.<sup>1</sup> Exercise is known to rely on the reward system of the brain, and can eject waves of dopamine to create a sense of euphoria.<sup>2</sup> The euphoria created can be assumed as positive—not only does this help aid in the growth of an individual's mental health, but the body also benefits from this, with a more fit physique and stronger systems. In my own personal experience, I can relate to this experience of euphoria through skateboarding. Skating is an extremely physical sport, and generally in a session I can go four or five hours without taking a break. When I skate uninterrupted for that long, the euphoria is equivalent to the experience of "runner's high", which comes from long-distance running. I also can experience a different form of euphoria through landing tricks, which could be related to an individual beating their own personal record in an exercise.

Music is an incredible tool of inducement; the act of listening to, dancing to, and creating music all are known to create a sense of euphoria. Frisson—defined as "a musically induced affect that shows close links to musical surprise, (...) associated with pleasant tingling feeling, raised body hairs, and gooseflesh"—are an illustration of a physical response to the emotion.<sup>3</sup> John Sloboda was a researcher that sought out to determine the exact aspects of musical pieces that generated frisson, and found that unexpected harmonies, as well as melodic and harmonic

---

<sup>1</sup> Willett, Sarah. "Runner's High." *Lehigh University*, www.lehigh.edu/~dmd1/sarah.html.

<sup>2</sup> Knab, Amy M and J Timothy Lightfoot. "Does the difference between physically active and couch potato lie in the dopamine system?" *International journal of biological sciences* vol. 6,2 133-50. 9 Mar. 2010

<sup>3</sup> Harrison, Luke and Psyche Loui. "Thrills, chills, frissons, and skin orgasms: toward an integrative model of transcendent psychophysiological experiences in music" *Frontiers in psychology* vol. 5 790. 23 Jul. 2014, doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2014.00790

sequences, were the main instigators.<sup>4</sup> However, this has to do with the musical aspect of a song, but sometimes the tangible emotion in a singer's voice can have the same effect. For the most part, the emotion that an artist puts into a song is easily translatable in the listener's head. Some of my most euphoric memories involve either listening to or creating music, and the type of euphoria I experienced is unique to music. However, the emotions that can emerge from music are not strictly euphoric; if I'm somewhat sad or distressed, listening to sad music can snowball the experience. Generally, something that induces either euphoria or dysphoria is unique to that specific emotion; music is one of the instances that can evoke either feeling.

Other ways of inducing these emotions that are not limited to one or the other are the wide variety of neuropsychiatric conditions. It's more common for these conditions to elicit both euphoria and dysphoria, in their positive and forms. Perhaps the most encompassing example of this wide array of emotions induced is bipolar disorder. The symptoms of bipolar disorder include (but are not limited to): intense emotions, illogical thinking, manic episodes, depression, irrational sleep schedules, extreme energy, easy agitation, lack of energy, as well as both euphoria and dysphoria.<sup>5</sup> Bipolar disorder is more of a blanket term, referring to four different subsets; depending on the particular affective disorder, mania or depression may be more prominent.<sup>6</sup> Euphoria and dysphoria are cohesive in this experience, and act almost as one entity. The euphoria comes from the manic episodes entailed, while experiencing dysphoria is common in the depressive episodes. In powerful episodes of mania, it's common for the manic individual have a surge of overconfidence.<sup>7</sup> With this overconfidence comes great euphoria, for the individual believes that they are capable of anything. However, mania itself is a unhealthy condition and can have drastic impacts on the state of one's mind. Mania molds euphoria into a negative phenomenon; while euphoria is generally denoted as a positive feeling (and dysphoria negative), in reality the context is the defining factor. In certain cases this leads to incredible growth in creativity, and the result of this can be outstanding. This can also be very negative on an individual's life, when the ego is boosted to a point of delusion. Bipolar is one of the best examples of a method of inducing that can have mixed results.

The many different ways in which euphoria be induced also rely on a lens to fully form them, but have equal—if not more—say in the matter.

## The Return

The air was stale, with little dust left to settle, in the once-occupied room. Plastic sheeting blanketed the entire space, peppered with the spray of an eggshell-tinted paint. About half of the walls had been coated in the paint, but recklessly so, and it was obvious there had been no more than one layer applied (the original green underneath still peeked through). The side without paint displayed numerous stains and marks of various sizes: there was a buildup of grime in the far corner, where the children would lay on their backs and repeatedly press their feet against in spite of their mother's request, a small splatter mark an inch down from the ceiling, where a projectile blueberry had hit after missing its initial target, a crudely written "FWD" in sharpie (these were initials) about a foot up from floor of the room, which had been previously obscured

---

<sup>4</sup>ibid

<sup>5</sup>"Bipolar Disorder." *National Institute of Mental Health*, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, [www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/bipolar-disorder/index.shtml](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/bipolar-disorder/index.shtml).

<sup>6</sup>U.S Department of Health and Human Services (n 5)

<sup>7</sup>Bressert, Steve. "Manic Episode Symptoms." *Psych Central*, 16 Jan. 2018, psychcentral.com/disorders/manic-episode/.

by the now-removed bed, and a fist-sized hole by the entrance of the room, which had emerged from a fit of rage. The wall had multiple other spots, smudges, and blemishes that were both too insignificant to remark and unknown in origin. Posters that used to adorn the wall in a cluttered, overwhelming fashion had been taken down and recycled. The only remaining piece of furniture was a footstool that had been exiled from the living room, and was relocated to this room for storage reasons. It sat in solitude underneath the sheets of plastic, reminiscing of the feet that had once rested on it. The floor fantasized of the days when it was cloaked in a rug, kept warm in the winter and fashionable in the summer. If it could have creaked out a moan it would have; nothing walked on it to create the noise. The walls felt naked and betrayed, stripped of the posters that decorated them and the furniture that embraced them. The windows hadn't been opened in months, and itched to stretch their hinges. The ceiling fan just wished to spin, so as to get rid of the piled dust of its ticklish blades. All three outlets mourned for the lamps they had become so close to, and felt meaningless with nothing to power. The whole room seemed to expand and retract in one long, melancholy sigh.

The house mourned with the room, unsure of where it had gone wrong. That room had been arguably the healthiest room of the house for countless years, kept clean and inhabited consistently. The room was a decaying organ of the house, and as the room suffered so did the house. The house even went as far as to redirect the rats and termites away from that area, in hopes of making it seem more appealing; nothing changed. The days of glory were behind that room, and another room had already taken the throne.

## The Amphibian

A small frog awoke to the sudden splashing of water. Its eyes scanned the ill-lit pond, newly greeted by the friendly morning fog, which made it almost impossible to make out anything on the surface, but the increased lapping of water on the shoreline indicated a presence. If the frog was capable of goosebumps, it would have at least doubled in size. It chose instead to expand its throat and release a proud croak, to no avail; before it could even finish the croak, it was engulfed by a creature which was, in fact, more than double its size. The frog was swished around and down the coiling gullet of the creature until eventually it found itself in the creature's humble stomach mixture. This was to be its resting place.

If the amphibian were capable of emotions, it would have yearned for a longer life; it could have eaten so many more flies, or even fulfilled its evolutionary destiny by mating and successfully carrying on its legacy. What purpose would this frog have, if not to survive and reproduce?

*I've always known to expect death just around the corner, but how cruel of timing! I just woke up!* it may have thought.

It would have writhed not in agony of being corroded by stomach acids, but rather in agony of never becoming a reputable frog.

*I've spent my entire life at this pond and not once seen any critter bigger than me! This pond is native to minnows, small trout, and the occasional turtle, but certainly no vicious carnivore quadruple my size! I am perplexed regarding the origins of this foul beast, and wish not to die only so that I can seek out the monster and cease its rampage!*

The frog would have thrashed in anger and sadness, making the beast quite nauseous. If the frog was capable of tears, they would have flowed freely from its peculiar eyes. The mixing of the stomach acid with the newfound salty tears, as well as the thrashing of the amphibian in

his intestines, would have forced the monster to upheave the load onto the lilypad it was residing on at the time.

During that, the frog would have noticed a rumbling of his surroundings, and would have mistaken it for the next step in the process of digestion.

*This is it! The end has come! I only hope that when I am excreted as waste that it be by the pond in which I grew up in,* the frog may have thought, in what it believed to be its last moments.

To the frog's surprise, it would have been launched in the same coiling direction it had just moments ago fallen down. There the frog would have laid, on the lilypad, gathering its bearings. As it gained a better sense of what had just happened, the frog would have looked towards the sky, which would have been obscured by the same behemoth that had engulfed it moments before. Upon closer inspection, the frog would have realized that the mass in front of it was, in fact, a fellow amphibian.

*By god, this is by far the largest frog I've ever laid eyes on!* The frog would have thought, assuming it had enough of a concept of a "god" to use it in speech (thought, rather).

"Why must you resort to cannibalism, Large One? With a mass as profound as yours, you have such a larger array of options for food!" The frog would have questioned, supposing it was capable of speech as well.

The Large One might have chosen to chuckle at the Naive One beneath it.

"Have you not heard the legends? I suppose not much news makes its way all the way out here, this is most definitely the most isolated pond I've come across," the Large One would have boomed, booming not with intention to intimidate but rather by nature of being so large.

The Naive One would have barely managed to let out a stammering "What legends?"

"Don't you wonder how I have amassed such a large being? Not by consuming only flies, oh, certainly not! The legend goes that a frog can grow in size only by eating their fellow amphibian, and I am living proof of that legend. I have taken down entire ponds, leaving the waters frogless! And I am here to do the same in this pond, with no difficulty," the Large One would have explained. "In fact, this is the first time I have ever downed a frog and had them come back up, which is unacceptable!"

With this, the Large One would have leapt for the Naive One, underestimating the Naive One's agility. The Naive One would have predicted this movement, as the speech seemed to be leading towards that, and jumped just moments before the Large One's gaping mouth struck the lilypad. The Large One would have been dazed for a couple minutes, due to the unexpected collision with the surprisingly stiff lilypad the Naive One once rested on. The Naive One would have taken this time to assess its options, and eventually come to the conclusion that its best option was to desert its beloved pond.

*Goodbye my sweet, I hope to see you again one day. Perhaps I may find other frogs and warn them of the coming danger,* the Naive One would have contemplated. *Yes! I can find others and warn them, we can anticipate the attack and retaliate with our own forces!*

The Naive One would have repeated its goodbyes, but with joy this time, and then ventured out into the unknown lands, in search of others. The Naive One may have eventually found the aid it needed, and successfully ended the Large One's reign. It's possible that the frog nations would have rejoiced in the fall of an evil force, and the Naive One would have been renowned pondwide. The Naive One would have finally found the purpose that had hid itself so well from it, nonetheless something beyond mere reproduction. It's all possible, if the Naive One

had been so complex; however, the frog was capable of nothing, and instead lay bleakly in the mixture of bugs, fish, and stomach acid.

\*\*\*

Through storytelling, I allowed myself to create individual lenses to express a certain form of either euphoria or dysphoria. The stories all use third-person narration, to properly separate myself from the expressions of the two emotions. There are key aspects of each story that relate to my own experiences, but do not control the entire work and allow for aspects unfamiliar to me to be expressed. It's important for me to emphasize that no matter how many articles I read, how many pages of research I can create from the knowledge learned, and how well I can articulate it, it's impossible for me to properly illustrate some of these feelings without ever feeling them. Perspective is also an incredibly influential factor in the process of understanding and collecting these various forms of euphoria and dysphoria, so by writing through various perspectives I am attempting to encompass as many interpretations of euphoria and dysphoria as possible. Each story is not limited to a specific lens, and in fact all of the stories incorporate multiple lenses of the two sensations. I worked in this manner with an intention to reflect the fluidity of the emotions and their forms of communication. I feel that storytelling is an effective way of capturing something as intangible as my subject is, as opposed to cold, hard research showing scientific studies. Is it not easier for a reader (as well as writer, really) to understand a representation of an emotion through descriptive words rather than a scientific explanation of the combination of chemicals released in the brain?

There are a considerable amount of factors that influence how euphoria and dysphoria are created and how those emotions are perceived, but they all rely on each other for a successful following through. The use of "successful" in this instance does not refer to either positive or negative outcomes, but rather the success of the experience taking place. A lens of interpretation is just as important as the inducing factor, and both actually combine to make the whole experience stronger. I've learned to appreciate these two specific emotions in a different manner, and even interpret where they're coming from. When you can decipher the origins and intent of euphoria and dysphoria, it allows you to expand from it and gain a better ability of deciphering the waves to come. Not understanding this creates unhealthy habits of misinterpreting these feelings and misusing the reward system in your brain. This can lead to extremes of either emotion, and the disarray of a mental state that follows. A person that relies too heavily on euphoria will gain a tolerance to the sensation, and eventually a blindness outright. In my life, I've become more familiar with euphoria than dysphoria; this is not to say I'm at all unfamiliar with dysphoria, but instead that episodes of euphoria have been a more constant thing in my life. As I continue to explore new sides of these emotions, I collect a better understanding of them as a whole. At this point in my life, it's fair to say I'm barely—if at all—qualified to explain any of these phenomena; the only way I could accurately understand the entire spectrum of euphoria and dysphoria would to have already lived a full life, and compare and contrast the experiences I had compiled. Even then, I can never rely on that information being concrete—an individual's interaction with any form of euphoria or dysphoria is at least to some degree unique to them. I can compile an illustration of the more graspable concepts of these two sentiments, but the more complex it becomes, the more intangible the experience is.

## Works Cited

- Behrman, Andy (2002). *Electroboy: A Memoir of Mania*. Random House Trade Paperbacks. pp. Preface: Flying High.
- “Bipolar Disorder.” *National Institute of Mental Health*, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, [www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/bipolar-disorder/index.shtml](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/bipolar-disorder/index.shtml).
- “Bipolar Disorder Diagnosis: Challenges and Future Directions.” *NeuroImage*, Academic Press, 10 May 2013, [www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0140673613609897](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0140673613609897).
- Harrison, Luke. “Thrills, Chills, Frissons, and Skin Orgasms: toward an Integrative Model of Transcendent Psychophysiological Experiences in Music.” *Frontiers*, Frontiers, 4 July 2014, [www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2014.00790/full](http://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2014.00790/full).
- Knab, Amy M and J Timothy Lightfoot. “Does the difference between physically active and couch potato lie in the dopamine system?” *International journal of biological sciences* vol. 6,2 133-50. 9 Mar. 2010
- “Manic Episode Symptoms.” *Psych Central*, 16 Jan. 2018, [psychcentral.com/disorders/manic-episode/](http://psychcentral.com/disorders/manic-episode/)