

Comparison essay of "an insatiable emptiness" and "distorted image" essay



Body - image anxiety is an issue that many people struggle with nowadays. There are many factors that contribute to one's anxiety of body image, for example it could stem from media, social and personal view. "An Insatiable Emptiness," by Evelyn Lau, focuses on her own personal struggles with bulimia, and her strained relationships with her mother. "Distorted Image," by Susan McClland focuses on the social dynamics of body image and provide reports of different cultural aspects on body image. Both of these articles explore a different perspective of how one cope with body image issue and the impact upon it.

In "An Insatiable Emptiness," Evelyn Lau narrates her struggles with bulimia and her relationship with her mother. She felt discomfited as her body grew, and she wants to postpone her growth by forced vomiting. Further, her dysfunctional family worsened her condition of being bulimic, and her manipulative mother guilt Evelyn of being ashamed of her body. As a helpless young girl, the only way to be in control of her life is to be in control of her weigh as she describes that throwing up made her feel empowered and immortal.

She described that her developing body was taunted by her mother, she wrote, "My breast continued to develop, horrifying my mother, who frequently made me undress in front of her so she could ridicule them" (Lau, 2013, p. 433). In addition the author describes, as she gained weight; her extremely skinny mother would in return lose weight to guilt her daughter of feeling isolated. In the end the author concludes that she overcome bulimia, as she no longer feel empowered when she throw up , and the pain of throwing up has cause the deterioration of her health.

<https://assignbuster.com/comparison-essay-of-an-insatiable-emptiness-and-distorted-image-essay/>

She concludes that everyone needs to deal with the traumas within themselves, and instead of using harming ways to tear themselves apart mentally and physically. Western media have globalized the standard beauty, and in this article Susan McClland discuss the impact of how standard beauty is westernized, and its effect on different cultural. The author gives cases of woman from different cultural backgrounds that are forced to accept the westernized beauty standard. She explains that a woman named Zahra Dhanani was pressured by her mother to be thin, because her mother thought that by being thin means beautiful, and it results Zahra to developed bulimia.

According to one of the interviewee, Niva Piran, a clinical psychologist, explained that “ The ideal of standard beauty is uniformed by the mass media, and attractiveness is often perceived as thin body figure, and light skinned”(McClland, 2013, paragraph 3, p. 445). Thus, this component has contributed to people from different culture to develop body image anxiety which can lead to eating-disorder such as, anorexia and bulimia.

The author also discuss the history aspect of body image; before the 19th century woman who are larger are consider as healthy and this idea was shifted after the industrialization, and woman are now pressured to accept that being thin is considered beautiful. The author also criticized that the media are constantly demanding light skinned and thin figured woman to be presented. The essay concluded that if the media and the society do not change the idea of accepting themselves, woman will continued to be pressured and scrutinized by the society and therefore feel pressured to look like a certain way.

<https://assignbuster.com/comparison-essay-of-an-insatiable-emptiness-and-distorted-image-essay/>

Both authors discuss body image and eating disorder. In the "An Insatiable Emptiness", Evelyn Lau discusses her struggle of being bulimic, which was contributed by her controlling mother, and the only way she can feel in control is to become bulimic. She uses a first person point of view, and gives descriptive details about her experience of being bulimic. In the article, the author is very descriptive of her feeling and uses metaphors of her body change.

She writes her sensation of her vomiting, "I was not throwing up half-digested food, as I had for years, but what I felt like a complete objects-plastic balls, pieces of Lego, nuts and bolts that tore at me as they came out of my body" (Lau, paragraph 18, p. 433). Her words are shocking as it is graphic; the author wants to portray her experience to the reader from an introspective point of view. In the "Distorting Images", Susan McClland uses a third person point of view, and objective view to provide insight of how media and society pressures woman to look like a certain standard.

The author uses from a journalistic perspective to examine that the media are constantly demanding light skinned and thin figured woman to be presented to the public. The "Distorted Images" and the "An Insatiable Emptiness" are different, for the previous use graphic narration of her emotion and feeling in battling with bulimia, while the later uses a broad view of body image topic, in which it provides cases and research of the topic. They are both present the story that parental view of body shape that could contribute to bulimia and anorexia, such as the cases of Zahra Dhanani and Evelyn Lau.

In comparison of the two articles, the reader may feel that the "An Insatiable Emptiness" portrays a more powerful description of body image anxiety and eating-disorder. Body image anxiety, such as bulimia and anorexia is a familiar topic among the society, but the subject coming from a first person point of view of struggling with eating-disorder is not commonly written. As Evelyn's descriptions of her struggles, the reader will have a better understanding of how the author felt as she battles with bulimia. The words of her writing are effective, as it truly portrays the angst of being a bulimic without any supports and comfort.

While the "Distorted Image" provides a broader range of research point of view to discuss body image anxiety issue. Susan McCelland provides an interesting point of view on how modern society is still filled with sexism and racism, and that woman of minority is often prone to be pressured by possessing a western look, but the article lacks the personal depth of one's feeling about body image anxiety, in comparison to "An Insatiable Emptiness". The writing styles of two articles are complete opposite. Evelyn Lau's writing portrays an in depth personal painful experience of body image anxiety and narrative writing.

On the other hand, Susan McCelland focuses on topics of how western look is consider as standard beauty, and provide data and research of its effect that could lead to bulimia and anorexia. From the two articles, it can be concluded that there are many factors that can contribute to eating-disorder; it could be from society, parent or media, but the one thing woman can do is to conquer body image anxiety and accept who they are. After all it is not

the society and parents that breaks them, it is the demon that they have to conquer, and in return to accept themselves.