

A Journal: Eating Disorder Suffered by Woman in Marya Hornbacher's

Memoir Entitled *Wasted: a Memoir of Anorexia and Bulimia*.

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Background of the Study

The women's desire to be beautiful, slim and graceful makes them try every way to get it. These efforts help the rise of mental illnesses suffered by women such as bulimia and anorexia. The condition that women are usually suffered from mental illnesses can influence many literary works in the world.

Literature is an expression of society, if it assumes that literature, at any given time, mirrors the current social situation 'correctly' it is false: it is common place, trite and vague if it means only that literature depicts some aspect of social reality. To say that literature mirrors or express life is even more ambiguous. A writer inevitably expresses his experience and total conception of life but it would be manifestly untrue to say that he expresses the whole life or even life of given time completely and exhaustively (Wellek and Warren, 1973: 20).

According to those backgrounds above, it is interested to analyze Marya Hornbachers' memoir entitled *Wasted: a Memoir of Anorexia and Bulimia*, especially in its relation with patriarchy, capitalism, and mental illnesses suffered by women in the memoir. To analyze this memoir, this research will have the title of *Eating Disorder Suffered by Woman in Marya Hornbacher's Memoir Entitled Wasted: a Memoir of Anorexia and Bulimia*.

Summary of the Memoir

Marya wrote her book to tell people how she was struggling with her eating disorders. We could assume that Marya analyzed her own eating disordered behavior such as purging, binging, counting calories, etc. Marya thought that there were various influences for people who suffered from eating disorders which were heredity, genetics, personality, culture, etc. Marya wrote this book to warn people especially woman not to follow her as bulimic and anorexic.

Theoretical Framework

Formula of Eating Disorder Story

Eating disorder story is the story that tells someone's life in which the main character of the story is suffered from eating disorders. The eating disorder story is categorized as popular literature which is influenced by popular culture. Nachbar and Lause (1992) say that the popular culture is "a culture in form of goods and activities that are created for and consumed by not the elite people but common people, the masses". The popular literary works will contain popular culture to reflect people's beliefs and values in order to get attention and be accepted by masses. As a consequence, there are cultural elements that can be called as a formula.

Marxist Feminism

Marxism is a sociological theory introduced by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. According to Bottomore, "Marxism is a 'philosophical anthropology' first formulated in Marx's early writings" (notably in the Economic and Philosophical

Manuscripts, 1991: 27). The Marxism criticizes capitalist's oppression in the society because capitalist, which is also the bourgeoisie, monopolies the production activities and takes the benefits from the proletarian. Marx states that "capitalism contains the seeds of its own destruction and that it will eventually collapse as part of the natural historical process" (Booker, 1995: 72).

Interpellation

In this era, people are influenced and constructed by cultural ideas since they were born. For example, when we have a girl child, we will give her dolls as her toys. On the other side, when we have a boy child, we will give him robot as his toys. The example above is called gender role interpellation. The following quotation describes the meaning of interpellation in relation to popular culture.

You are addressed – by ads, for instance – as a particular sort of subject (a consumer who values certain qualities), and by being repeatedly hailed in this way you come to occupy such a position. Cultural studies asks how far we are manipulated by cultural forms and how far or in what ways we are able to use them for other purposes, exercising 'agency', as it is called (Culler, 1997: 45).

From the quotation above we know that people is called as a subject in interpellation. Culler says that ads are containing the idea of interpellation. We know that interpellation is used in many aspects of life, especially in marketing of products.

Mass Media and Women

Women want to be beautiful, slim, and grace. The media helps to introduce the product of beauty to women. There are advertisements that offer soaps and skin

creams displayed in women’s magazines. These advertisements are used to inform women how to cope with acne and aging. The advertisements claim to be able to solve women’s problems. The following is the example taken from Brumberg (1988) how *The Seventy-firsts* editor claims that her magazine helps to solve women’s problems, especially those of adolescence.

This ideas about adolescence and the hope of profits spawned *Seventeen* magazine, which made its first appearance at the start of the school year in September 1944, Helen Valentine, the first editor, proclaimed, “*Seventeen* is your magazine, High School Girls of America!” The magazine built its success on its ability to sell fashion and beauty products to teenage girls (Brumberg, 1988: 252).

The Seventeen also offers female readers how to control their weight. Controlling weight to get slimmer is important here because slimness is a criterion for a beautiful woman. The *Seventeen* also publishes articles on nutrition and information about diet foods (Brumberg, 1988: 252).

ANALYSIS

The Formula of Wasted: a Memoir of Anorexia and Bulimia

No	Formula	Description
1	The Troubled Girlhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marya has trouble with food. • Marya has trouble with her body image. • Bulimia and Anorexia.
2	The Desire for Autonomy and Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marya has desire to control her own life. • Marya has desire to control her body and what she eats.
3	The Professional Appearance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The doctor, psychiatrist, nutritionist, and psychologist’s appear to treat Marya’s

		eating disorder disease.
4	Lowest Health Condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marya weighs only fifty-two pounds and she is black out. • Marya is given a week to live.
5	Recovery Condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marya has desire to get better life. • Marya has a better life and health.

Table 1 Formula of Wasted: a Memoir of Anorexia and Bulimia

The Influence of the Media

We know that beauty product's advertisements depict beautiful, tall, and slim women as models. These advertisements are shown in television and women's magazines, so people can freely watch them. These kinds of advertisement usually show how women should look like in the society by giving the ideas that beautiful women are tan, tall, and slim. The image of perfect women is presented continuously and it is consumed by people, especially women. Because of this continuous presentation of the image of perfect woman, the women readers is called or hailed by it. Because women are addressed in such a way, they believe that the way they were addressed is an accepted idea in their consciousness. Most of women believe that slim, feminine, tan, and tall are the best criteria of women's beauty. The following quotation shows Marya's statement that her society is constructed by the media.

My generation was raised on popular media, television, teen magazines, billboards that bellowed "If you could choose your body, which would you choose?" with pictures of hard bodies getting yet harder at a very chic gym. Well, what the hell do you think I'd choose? The perfect body, of course. Our magazines were stuffed with ways to achieve it. "Lose That Baby Fat!" "Nose Job for Your Sweet Sixteen!" (Hornbacher, 1998: 46).

From the quotation above, we can see that media has central effect in influencing Marya's society. Media gives idea to the people to believe. For example, the society believes that being slim is better than being fat. On the other words, the quotation says that "if you are slim, there are many jobs for your sixteen."

The Influence of Fairy Tales

In the memoir, Marya tells us that she loves reading novels. She even spends her time reading novel alone in her bedroom. Her father, Jay Hornbacher often gives Marya novels to read. In the tales she reads, there are always hero and heroine. Most of the tales show that the hero is the man and the heroine is the woman, and that the heroine is usually a beautiful well-shaped woman. Some people also believe that the story only deals with beautiful woman.

We read the endlessly boring series of *Sweet Valley High* pulp novels like Bibles, with their terribly chipper stories of twin sisters who were, of course, the most popular girls in their Southern California high school. They were smart and nice and always getting the guy. As every single book in the series reminded us, they were also blond, blue-eyed, tan, and a "perfect size six." A pair of literary Barbie dolls (Hornbacher, 1998: 46).

From the quotation above, we can see that teenager novels can contain interpellation idea. It uses blond, blue-eyed, tan, and slim woman to hail the readers, especially woman readers.

The Influence of Fashion

In *Wasted: A Memoir of Anorexia and Bulimia*, Marya shows her opinion about fashion that is popular in that era.

In front of the gym, I seem to remember a plastic statue of Venus de Milo, missing half a breast and both arms. The inside foreshadowed the 1980s “fitness” craze: women bopping around, butt busting and doggie leg lifting, sweating, wearing that pinched, panicky expression that conveyed the sentiment best captured by Galway Kinnell: “as if there is a hell and they will find it” (Hornbacher, 1998: 16).

It shows that there is a popular fashion style at that time which is 1980s fitness craze. The 1980s fitness craze shows not only the popular practices, but also the fashion. When people, especially women, go to gym, they usually use gym suit that is very tight. Marya tells that in the 1980s fitness craze’s era, women use sexy clothes which show their breasts and butts’ curves. The women will be called or hailed to accept the idea that by wearing these clothes they will be stylish. Therefore, if you want to be stylish, you should wear this fitness clothes as promoted by the 1980s fashion style. However, when you want to wear this fitness clothes, you should be slim.

Marya as the Subject of Interpellation

This is the quotation that shows how Marya is hailed by the advertisement.

At age 5, she fights cruelly with her friend Gina. After calling Gina's mother fat "out of pure spite," she then hits Gina: I clock her. She cries. Baby, [sic] I say. I flounce out onto the deck, climb onto the picnic table, pull on my blue Mickey Mouse sunglasses, imagining that I am the sophisticated bathing suit lady in the Diet Lipton Iced Tea commercials, tan and long and thin (Hornbacher, 1998: 11).

From the quotation above, Marya as a five year old girl, has a long desire to pretend to be the model of Diet Lipton Iced Tea commercials as a “tan and long and thin” woman. She is called and hailed by the ads because these ads are

continuously watched by Marya. By imitating the model, Marya feels “sophisticated”. She is dreaming to be beautiful like the model.

This is a quotation that shows how Marya loves to paint herself with make-up.

One day I went into the bathroom, pulled open my mother's makeup drawer, pulled my hair back, and did a strange revival of what I had done as a very small child: I painted myself. Black eyeliner applied Cleopatra-style, green eye shadow, brilliantly red lipstick, thick mascara (Hornbacher, 1998: 58).

The quotation above shows that Marya uses her mother’s make-up equipment. Marya has begun to have a make-up since she was kid. This case shows that women have to be trained to use make up even when they were still kid.

Woman as Beauty Mannequin

We can assume that people especially women believe that in the work places, women have to be beautiful. First, women should be able to paint their face with beauty tools such as lipstick, eye shadow, eye liner, mascara, etc. The use of make up here is to get image of mannequin which has spotless and dainty face. Next, in the work places especially in display profession, the job providers will prefer to choose slim, tall, and beautiful women. The slimness, tallness, and appearance will increase the women’s values. These phenomena are called commodification of female body. Women sell not only her skill, but also her body. Women should compete with others by using both of her skills and body.

Marya’s Alienation from Her Body

Marya describes that she often spends time in front of the mirror: "pinching my thighs hard, harder, until welts rose, slapping my ass to see if it jiggled, so I could say, Fat bitch" (Hornbacher, 1998: 41). Here, Marya describes the feeling of her being separated from her body, and she imagines as if she is seeing herself from the outside. From the quotation above, it shows how Marya is dissatisfied with the shape of her body even when she was a kid. We can assume that her being alienated from her body is caused by the process of interpellation she has since she was a kid and goes on until she was a teenager. This interpellation results in her confused understanding of the meaning or function of her body. Then, she wants to control her own body as the reaction to fulfill the interpellation she is used to have. Therefore she is alienated from her body.

Marya's Dissatisfaction about Her Body

The following quotation shows how she feels dissatisfied with her body. First, she feels dissatisfied because her body is not suitable for a ballet suit.

I am not a waif. Not now, not then. I'm solid. Athletic. A mesomorph: little fat, lot of muscle. I can kick a ball pretty casually from one end of a soccer field to the other, or bloody a guy's nose without really trying, and if you hit me real hard in the stomach you'd probably break your hand. In other words I am built for boxing, not ballet. I went home from dance class that day, put on one of my father's sweaters, curled up on my bed, and cried. I crept into the kitchen that evening as my parents were making dinner, the corner of the counter just above my head. I remember telling them, barely able to get the sour confession past my lips: I'm fat (Hornbacher, 1998: 16).

It shows that Marya feels dissatisfied because her body does not fit with the body of a ballet dancer. Marya describes that her body is solid, athletic, little fat, and lot

of muscle. She also can kick a ball casually and think that her body is built for boxing.

Second, Marya feels dissatisfied with her body when she knows that her cousin wears slim-sized jeans while she has to wear regular-sized jeans.

I wasn't. I was regular. I had a gray dress that my mother said was darling. I didn't want to be darling. I was sick of being darling. I wanted to be Slim. Or Chic. The dress was a shapeless square of gray fleece with two yellow stripes around the hips. I put it on when she brought it home for me, stood on the toilet, and bellowed, I LOOK LIKE AN ELEPHANT! I bawled. She said, No, honey, you look darling (Hornbacher, 1998: 38).

Marya is disappointed because she should wear regular-sized jeans. She says that she looks like an elephant in the regular-sized jeans. It can be seen that Marya really wants to be slim so that she can wear slim-sized jeans.

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