

Stephanie Sierra  
FIQWS 10008 & 10108

### **Exploratory Essay Reflection**

My exploratory essay illustrates the Freudian concept of wishful impulses presented in the short story "Eight Bites," by Carmen Maria Machado as the narrator is an insecure woman who undergoes bariatric surgery for societal approval. Additionally, it shows the effect that stereotypes and toxic messages have on our brains and personality development. These negative conditions lead to various physiological conditions previously discussed within Freud's Lecture III. What prompted me to write about this subject is the fact that I feel heavily identified with the principal character of this short story, as I recognize that sometimes I try very hard to fulfill society's standards regarding femininity and body image, and at times I pay more mind to stereotypes than to my own ideas and beliefs, and what I know to be true. In addition, I have personal experience with bulimia, since being skinny for me has always been an ideal goal that I took so far, to the point where I put my health and life at risk. Therefore, the "Eight Bites" character was an easily relatable one, as I saw a little bit of myself, in her. My purpose in writing this essay was to expose how being a woman in today's world truly is sometimes. and create conscience to the dangers of the toxic messages that society vociferate, in order to create a "perfect woman" model. I consider the potential audience for my essay to be women in general, since I think it's safe to say most of us have experienced loneliness and incomfortity about our physical appearances in at least one or more instances in our lives. I believe that in writing this essay we are all able to communicate and express our ideas, as well as our repressed feelings. I think my essay's audience can comprehend my position on this topic and my concern for the millions of lives that insecurity and body shaming has stolen, because of the violent and prevalent stereotypes that exist within society.