

Book Title: Slim to None: A Journey Through the Wasteland of Anorexia

Author: Jennifer Hendricks

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Book Review by Tish Rops

Graduate Student

Southwest Minnesota State University

tish.rops@pas.k12.mn.us

In the book *Slim to None*, Hendricks describes the haunting life of someone who is living and dying with anorexia. We meet Jenny as she is contemplating her own death while lying in a hospital bed, barely able to see or speak due to the fact that her body is shutting down as a result of her disease. Jenny's story then flashes back to the onset of her anorexia at 14. Through her journal excerpts and the narrated scenes added by her father, Jenny shares her 11-year struggle with anorexia that includes hospitalizations, changing family dynamics, multiple therapists, childhood molestations, and ultimately her own death.

This book quickly pulls one into Jenny's mind and obsessions with her body. The journal excerpts are powerful and lend some astonishing insight into how all-encompassing the disease of anorexia can be, not only for the person who is suffering from the disease, but for the family, friends, and medical personnel involved with the individual. At times the book seems to become repetitious in relation to the journal entries and their constant similarities. However, it is important to keep in mind that this is what it was like for Jenny - an obsession. The book flows better at the beginning and at the end, when more narration from Jenny's father is included. These sections of the book also tend to provide more perspective from family and medical personnel who worked with Jenny.

It was startling to read of the depth of varying medical care Jenny received which was to no avail. During the last 5 years of her life she was outside of hospitals slightly over a month. Also interesting were the many different psychological approaches used to treat Jenny. One approach by an extremely confrontational therapist, who worked with Jenny for years, seemed to speed up the decline of Jenny's disease by causing her more self-doubt and confusion and inciting family conflict.

Jenny's story takes place in the 1980s when there was a less understanding of the disease. Although there has been progress in the treatment and understanding of anorexia, there is still much more to be done in order to find a truly effective treatment for the disease.