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A Literacy Narrative on the Toils of a Sick Woman

**Peer Review by Amr Elsayed (**Revisions are in **bold** and parenthesis**)**

Upon first glance at *“A Clinical Lesson at the Salpêtrière”*, I immediately felt shocked. Though I knew Sigmund Freud’s lecture was in a class setting, I couldn’t help but feel as if they were in a courtroom and the woman at the front was having her sentence/fate read to her. In some ways, that is what is happening in the photo. The students with their emotionless faces on one side of the room can be seen as the jury judging and taking notes on her condition and Freud can be seen as the judge, the person who confirms her illness. The woman is distinct both in her white shirt and stance, but also because she is being supported. What adds to this is the woman's composure and how she seems to be fainting or unconscious. **(Try to make your introduction about just the main points and not so detailed on your points or what’s in the picture)**

Though Freud’s work combated the notion at the time that hysteria was a medical diagnosis only found in women, I still found that the photo seems to support that idea in some ways. What caused me to feel this is that although this woman seems to be so physically and mentally unwell that she is unable to stand, she is still merely being observed. The significant lack of urgency in the situation is very similar to how doctors treated patients of hysteria, without much importance. The only person in the room that seems to have any actual concern is the woman to her left. Her arms are out as if to hold or catch the ill woman from the man’s clumsy heedless grasp on her. It angers me that she is the only one in the entire room that seems to see her as something more than just an object for study.

After some thought, I realized that I had such an immediate negative reaction and instantly thought of a judicial setting was because it greatly reminded me of similar photos, **(Comma added)** I’ve viewed during past U.S. history classes. Specifically, pre-20th-century politicians deciding the verdict of a minority. Based on these previous classes where we were shown photos much like this one, the backstory behind these tableaus were generally not positive. The photos share many commonalities such as the use of darker colors (brown in this case), a homogenous crowd of usually white men staring at something that they most likely deemed absurd at the front of the court, and of course, the minority that is under discussion. Although the subject here is different, the set-up seems to be extremely similar and in this case the woman is the minority. **(Good connection to outside source) (Add more your point, the first and second body paragraphs talk about the same thing and its repetitive)**

The tableau “*A Clinical Lecture at the Salpêtrière”* holds a great deal of power. Even at first glance without knowing much information, my thoughts were immediately negative. I felt anger at the fact that the obviously unwell woman was being treated with such carelessness. The audience is aloof and the man who is supporting her is holding her as if he was holding a mannequin used for observation rather than a living being. **(Make the conclusion contain all the points and wrap up the whole essay)**

**Comments**

* All sentences are written properly and are easily understood by the reader. They flow very well and portray the information in a good manner.
* I feel as if the topic sentence is a little confused and I don’t know what the topic is. The paragraphs need to be organized in a better way. I don’t see the introduction that has the points in the body and the conclusion also doesn’t wrap up on the points as well. Needs better structuring of paragraphs and clearer topic sentences at the beginning.
* I also don’t recognize a clear thesis to the paper. The whole paper just describes the picture, but the thesis isn’t written clearly. I can kind of see the detail pointing towards what the thesis might be, but it isn’t clearly written in the paper.
* The ideas flow smoothly, and the details are logical, and they make sense, but the paragraphs need better structure to improve the flow of the essay as a whole.
* The grammar is perfect, and the spelling is good. Verb tenses are appropriate, and the commas are where they are supposed to be. The essay is good on this part.
* Transitions need to be worked on a little between the paragraphs because the ideas are hopping from one to the other. Try to finish the idea completely before jumping to the next idea. Specifically, in your body paragraphs.
* There is no vagueness in the essay and no self-references are in the essay and all the pronouns in the essay are clear and properly used.