

**Julia Rodrigues**  
**Artist Statement**

Art has always been an outlet for me to release pent up emotions and express my truest feelings. I have always had an internal need to decipher the world I experience around me in creative and insightful ways. While attending college, I've struggled with being able to produce work that I feel resembles myself while still staying on topic for each assignment. One of the few pieces I've been granted creative freedom with, was my final for my Drawing II class. I've called this piece "Body Dysmorphia" and it's solely composed of graphite. This by far has been my most revealing work of art I've made and it's my favorite. I believe the best art comes from the soul and opens a door into the artist's world.

This assignment has allowed me to put my heart out on the page and perceive life how I see it. I've always struggled with body image, and since I can remember, I've been bullied and criticized for being frail. I depicted a woman looking in a mirror at a skeleton because that's how I've viewed myself or almost all of my life. I know for a fact I'm not the only woman struggling with body dysmorphia everyday as well. Society subconsciously puts pressure on women to be the definition of ideal beauty and the negative effects are always pushed under the rug. I'm extremely proud of the progress I've made towards alleviating myself from my body dysmorphia, and this piece has helped me express some of the remaining feelings I have left towards it. I hope that this piece resonates with my viewers and helps women feel less alienated while coping with this mental illness.