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English 110-H5

Professor Jesse Miller

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The Variety of Relationships and Values Towards Food

In the beginning of the semester, we took a look at David Foster Wallace's essay, "Consider The Lobster", where he discussed the variety of opinions on specifically boiling a lobster alive to be eaten. His writing provided a lot of support to address both sides of the argument, yet he ends his piece by claiming, "There are limits to what even interested persons can ask of each other" (Wallace, 510). This statement made me wonder what he meant by this, and it became more clear to me as other sources were examined in class. The essay "The End of Food" by Lizzie Widdicombe was an interesting piece about a man named Rob Rhinehart, who created the product Soylent to replace meals. The overall curiosity here was if our society was shifting to a point where we no longer had the time or need to have an actual meal, when it could be replaced with a liquified meal. As another point, in "Animals Like Us", author Hal Herzog shares several people's stories on their complex relationships and beliefs towards animals. Comparing all three pieces of writing, the same idea is demonstrated that everyone has a right to their own beliefs, and it needs to be recognized that it's alright to talk about our differing values with one another.

On the subject of the traditions, people have a variety of annual customs they follow each year that relate to food. Wallace describes the yearly event hosted in Maine, known as the Maine Lobster Festival, in great detail, "It's hot, and the sagged roof traps the steam and the smells, which latter are strong and only partly food-related. It is also loud, and a good percentage of the

Commented [1]: I agree with Natalie on this one. I love a good hook to introduce the reader to the essay at hand, and keep them reading. Something I tend to do for a hook is to start the first sentence off as a question. Perhaps pose a question to the reader, maybe even a provocative one. Then seamlessly integrate it into the sentence you already have written.

Commented [2]: I think that perhaps you could include one sentence prior to this one that would act as more of a hook to draw the readers into your paper. This sentence is a good way to start to introduce your sources, however it feels a bit rushed to start your paper off this way. If you had a hook that perhaps made a broad and engaging statement about the theme or main topic of your paper it would make your introduction even stronger.

Commented [3]: You don't need to cite the author's last name if you introduced him and his writing prior to making the quote. Simply a page number or direction into the specific part of the text is sufficient.

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Commented [4]: I agree completely with your thesis and think that it is a strong point to make, however I think that you could make it sound even stronger if you were to reword it so that it sounds a bit more argumentative. For instance, rather than saying "it's alright to talk about..." you could say "for ethics to make any progress in our society, it is necessary to talk about our differing values with one another." Or something along those lines.

total noise is masticatory” (Wallace, 2). This is a big event that Mainers and even tourists from around the country make sure to plan accordingly in order to make it. On the other hand, there are people with the opposing opinion that the Festival is a terrible reason for people to get together, “articles have described PETA urging boycotts of the Maine Lobster Festival, often deploying celebrity spokesmen like Mary Tyler Moore for open letters and ads saying stuff like ‘Lobsters are extraordinarily sensitive’ and ‘to me, eating a lobster is out of the question’” (Wallace, 504). Personally, I’m not a big fan of seafood so in this case I don’t really categorize myself as either side, but I do believe that the people that enjoy attending this event should be able to continue to do so without being reprimanded. It’s alright that these groups believe different things when it comes to eating animals, but it is unnecessary that people don’t want to allow others to follow their beliefs. This ties in with Widdicombe’s essay where Rob Rhinehart explained, “Food was such a large burden. It was also the time and the hassle. We had a very small kitchen, and no dishwasher” (Widdicombe, 1). He had this idea that his product Soylent, a liquified meal, saved him the drastic burden of having to waste time cooking, eating, and cleaning up a meal. The argument Rhinehart makes destroys the entire idea of family traditions that include sit down dinners, especially during the holiday season. Imagine Thanksgiving supper with everyone around the table, but subtract all the delicious food people brought to share, and instead picture one bottle of Soylent for everyone. Fortunately, we all share different opinions, and just because Rhinehart and the PETA group make certain lifestyle choices, it does not dismiss anyone from still continuing to follow their own traditions, which may include family meals with a buffet of food on the table.

Our varying lifestyles can make a big difference in how we are eating. In Widdicombe’s essay, she reminded us that liquified food is not a completely new idea, “Fifty years ago, when a

Commented [5]: Although a quite with great imagery, I'm not sure how this is relevant to the argument you're trying to make here.

Commented [6]: I believe that you could perhaps divide this into two sentences, mostly because this particular quote seems a bit like a hit and run quote. I believe that it would be a bit more effective if you either paraphrased the point that Wallace was trying to make in this quote. Or if you want to keep that quote, then you could add a sentence before or after the quote to explain its relevance or the point that Wallace was explaining.

Commented [7]: I, again, agree with Natalie on this one. I totally get what you're trying to say, however it's blunt of you to assert the negatives of Soylent at that. Add a naysayer to this part! It would cover the bases on any opinion to the reader.

Commented [8]: Although I agree that Soylent could be destructive, many may argue that Rhinehart did not intend for this because within the article he specifically states that "Soylent isn't coming for our Sunday potlucks. It's coming for our frozen quesadillas."(pg 3). Therefore, I suggest rewording this sentence as to some it could seem contradictory to what Widdicombe had to explain in her article. To make it less contradictory you could start off the sentence by saying "Some may argue the Rhinehart's idea would destroy...."

patient was too sick to eat, doctors ground up regular food and put it into feeding tubes”

(Widdicombe, 8). Anyone that is stuck in a hospital for an extended period of time that becomes incapable of feeding themselves may have to receive their nutrients this way, so it is a good option to have. Similarly, “From the sixties to the nineties, liquid meal replacements became popular with the diet crowd, because they made it easy to quantify how many calories you consume” (Widdicombe, 8). A lot of people live this way when they have certain goals of losing

weight or attaining more muscle. Both of these ideas may have begun, quite some time ago, but they have continued to remain strong components of how people decide to gain their nutrients to remain healthy. In Herzog’s essay, he describes a couple that had opposing eating habits. Judith

Black referred to herself as a vegetarian, “When she was 12, Judith decided that it was wrong to kill animals just because they taste good... But what exactly is an animal? While it is obvious that dogs and cats and cows and pigs are animals, it was equally clear to Judith that fish were not”

(Herzog, 1). Conflicting with Judith’s view, her husband, Joseph Weldon, believed “There is not a shred of moral difference between eating a Cornish hen and eating a Chilean sea bass. After all, he reasoned, both birds and fish are vertebrates, have brains, and lead social lives” (Herzog, 1).

Once these two discussed, Judith ended up coming to a different conclusion, giving up her vegetarian lifestyle completely. Wallace claims that there are limits to what even interested persons can ask of each other, but all of these scenarios are alike one another in the idea that people were in a scenario where they had to change something about their lifestyle that they were not used to. Most of the time, people are purposely or they are willing to make these changes. If people are so stuck on their own morals and not willing to have the discussion, it can be difficult to make the proper arrangements.

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Commented [9]: Once I read on further in the paragraph I understood how you were connecting these two sources, however, when I initially read this section it seemed like a very abrupt transition from the Widdicombe article to the Herzog article. Since these two articles have such different topics, I feel as though you could have a transition sentence here, that you could set up like: "Similar to Widdicombe, Herzog explains the idea that..." If you were to add a transition I believe that it could make this good text on text moment even more effective.

Commented [10]: I do not know if this quote is quite necessary. With this being the fourth quote in this one paragraph, I feel as though it is a bit overwhelmed with quotes. Also, I think that if you were to just paraphrase the beliefs of Judith's husband it would be just as effective, if not more effective, than including the quote itself. Therefore, I would suggest taking the quote out and explaining in your own words that her husband does not consider fish and birds to be any different from one another.

Commented [11]: I understand what you're saying here. However, I had to read it twice because of its length. I became lost after the third line. Perhaps consider breaking it into two separate sentences. I'd consider ending it at "each other, ..." and starting a new sentence afterward.

The outlying factor that is not always considered is the actual creature involved in the food practice. Wallace brings up, "There happens to be two main criteria that most ethicists agree on for determining whether a living creature has the capacity to suffer and so has genuine interests that it may or may not be our moral duty to consider" (Wallace, 506). When describing the process of boiling a lobster, it seems very clear that the lobster is experiencing some sort of uncomfortableness as it's claws can be heard scraping the edges of the kettle, but some have the understanding that lobsters lack enkephalin hardware which ~~disenables~~ them to truly experience pain. This information ~~raises~~ the question of what emotions animals are capable of, and the conflicting views are based on what people believe the answer to this question is. Herzog told the story of a woman named Carolyn who worked with ~~an~~ animal that had a brain smaller than a softball, but demonstrated wise and caring behavior, known as Snooty, the manatee. "Carolyn's life revolved around Snooty. She spent nearly every day with him. Food was a major part of their relationship. Manatees are vegetarians, and Carolyn fed him by hand- 120 pounds of leafy green vegetables, mostly lettuce, every day" (Herzog, 2). When it came time for Carolyn to leave town for a short period of time, Snooty would refuse to eat from anyone else due to the relationship ~~he~~ and Carolyn had developed. Carolyn would go as far to leave her vacations, just to come back and feed him. On one hand, there is the curiosity of how animals that we eat differ inside of their complex systems, and what emotions they can have and develop. Diverging from that idea is that generations ago, people lived off the land and this included killing a variety of animals to be able to feed a town of people. Even if they experience pain in the same way humans do, it's been a natural concept for ages now. The inconsistencies in our relations with other species are based on our own beliefs in how they think and feel, which leads us to making the decision of how we want to handle them in our own lives.

Commented [12]: This might just be preference, but I think that perhaps you could take out the quote that you have included in this first sentence and paraphrase that idea. This would allow you to instead add a quote to the second sentence because Wallace has so many examples that describe this pain in gruesome detail. For instance, on page 506 there are multiple quotes that describe the pain. One that might be beneficial is on page 506 and starts with "the lobster, in other words, behaves very much as you or I would..."

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Commented [13]: I think that this paragraph has a good text on text moment, however I think that it could be even stronger if you were to include a statement prior to or after this sentence that gives an overview of how these two sources work to help you make these conclusions that you do here at the end of your paragraph. This is referring to the last step in the Barclay's formula which says to explain how the passages help advance your claim.

Regardless of what our values and beliefs are and where they came from, they will always be different from each other. It's too complicated to clearly have an idea of what is the wrong and right lifestyle to live when it comes to any subject, which is why we must learn to accept that we all have the freedom to be entitled to our own opinion. When it comes to food, we cannot simply just expect others to agree with and go along with our own belief. We are created to be distinct in our own ways to spark conversation and learn how to understand a new point of view. | |

Commented [14]: Carolyn, I really like what you have written. I think that your ideas connect really well to all of the sources you used, as there are many contradictory viewpoints that each of the sources addresses. Also, I think that your text on text moments are coming together well. However, as I commented in a couple of areas I think that some of the quotes you added could either be further explained, changed out for another quote, or deleted entirely, in order to make your arguments a little bit stronger. Also, as I had commented some of your transitions could be improved when you go from talking about one source or idea to another. However, overall I really liked your paper.

Commented [15]: Carolyn, I apologize for the sparse help throughout your essay. Natalie had covered mainly everything that I could possibly find wrong/need of improvement. So, with that said, I think you could improve on the cohesiveness of certain sentences that I pointed out so the reader can glide through without tripping up on words. I do agree with Natalie on the jungle of quotes you offer as well. They're all very good quotes for the main argument you bring to the table; I think you could work on cutting a few out or adding more content before or after them to help the reader out with navigating such a complex topic. Otherwise, I thoroughly enjoyed reading this and it has given me inspiration and ideas to complete my own essay. Great work!

MLA Citations

Herzog, Hal and Ogden Publications, Inc. "Animals Like Us." *Utne*. UTNE Cure Ignorance,

July 2011. www.utne.com/environment/animals-like-us-human-pet-relationships.

Wallace, David Foster. *Consider The Lobster*. Little, Brown and Company. 13 Dec 2005.

Widdicombe, Lizzie. "The End of Food." *The New Yorker*. The New Yorker, 19 June 2017.

www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/05/12/the-end-of-food.

