Journal of Neumann’s First-year Knight Writers

Volume 1   Spring 2008
Mission Statement

The *Journal of Neumann’s First-year Knight Writers* represents quality writing by students in the first-year writing program. The voice of first-year students is respected and celebrated. Selections show the range of writing across sections of English 101, Effective Writing with Computers, and English 102, Research and Writing in the Disciplines. *The Journal of Neumann’s First-year Knight Writers* is intended to be a resource for students and faculty members in Neumann’s first-year program and at the College. The selections included in this first issue of the journal may serve as a springboard for student and faculty dialogue about topics, personal values, worldviews, information literacy, and quality in writing. Hopefully these selections will inspire readers to engage in active planning and pre-writing processes, revising, editing, possibly publishing, and most importantly, reflecting upon meaning.

Overview of This Issue

The essay types vary in scope from personal narrative to those that analyze issues, argue a point of view, critique a source on a specific topic, analyze three sources on a topic, develop a lengthier source-based argument, and finally, reflect upon the processes engaged in as they relate to new understandings about self, the assignments or topics, and values. Several students describe their experiences as a “journey” of sorts. Note taking and summarizing are included in this journal to emphasize the interconnectedness of researching and reasoning through the processes of writing. Several selections by the same students are included to show the evolution of ideas and voice across various genres for writing, even from one course to the next in Neumann’s required two-course sequence. One student’s complete portfolio for English 102 is included to show how she evidences more than information literacy, critical thinking, and writing competence, as she also integrates a religious worldview into the analysis of her topic and development of her argument.

Topics relate to aspects of identity, a contemporary philosophy of work and its relationship to happiness, gratitude as it is evidenced in one’s life, respect for one’s grandparent’s
profession, joy in the beauty of Nature and faith in God, acceptance for one’s special giftedness or body type, courage to resist bravado or to overcome barriers to success, and special appreciation for the support of many professionals and family members through life’s experiences. Students also write about global social issues, such as the effects of human trafficking, water as a global commodity as opposed to a natural resource, privacy issues as they relate to containing global disease, and the crisis of global hunger. Essays show varied purposes—to inform, to analyze, to summarize, to argue, to critique, to suggest a solution to a problem, and to reflect.

Processes

Members of the editorial advisory board review each essay, select those that they consider very good, secure each student’s legal consent to publish an edited version of the text, and engage in minimal processes of editing and copyediting the texts. Authors may select either APA or MLA conventions which members of the editorial advisory board may edit to represent most recent revisions to each style.

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Manuscript Submissions

Each year students interested in having their writing published may submit to editorial advisory board members their writing from either English 101 or English 102 for possible publication. The Journal will be published biennially. Students whose writing will be accepted for possible publication need to complete Neumann College’s Informed Consent Form for Neumann’s First-year Writing Journal.

The views expressed in the Journal of Neumann’s First-year Knight Writers do not necessarily reflect those of the editor, editorial board, the College, or anyone other than that of each student author.
The Journal of Neumann’s First-year Knight Writers
Volume I Issue I

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Editor:
Dr. Gail S. Corso, Associate Professor of English and Communication & Media Arts, Coordinator of Writing, Neumann College

Faculty Editorial Advisory Board:
Mrs. Oreanthy Gerovasiliou, Adjunct Instructor of English, Neumann College
Dr. Joseph C. Glass, Instructor, English, Neumann College
Dr. William J. Hamilton, Assistant Professor of English, Neumann College

Cover Design
Mrs. Oreanthy Gerovasiliou, Adjunct Instructor of English, Neumann College

Photographs
Dr. Gail S. Corso, Associate Professor of English and Communication & Media Arts, Coordinator of Writing, Neumann College

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“The girl that participates in math class and does her homework is not fun or exciting, but a dork.” This is the way my previous math class would describe me. This is the stereotype as I am known. It started in my senior year of high school, which was supposed to be the best year ever. Seniors are the big kids on campus, the kids who have the fun parties and stay out late. I was excited to be that older kid whom all the underclassmen admired. Sadly, my senior year came and I never became that stereotypical senior. I was, as people say, “the good girl, the one who never does anything wrong,” the one who simply has no desire to party. Partying seems like a quick and simple way to detract me from my dreams.

My stereotype has persisted, especially in math class. Since math has always been my downfall, I know I need to work harder to achieve a good grade. In class, I ask a question when I do not understand a specific equation, as requesting help is a wise decision. I talk to my teacher whenever I have a problem. Unfortunately, my younger classmates do not feel the same way about education as I do. My class peers, composed primarily of
males, occasionally sleep or eat during instruction. To them, receiving an education is a waste of time. The first day in math when I started to participate in class, the males judged me instantly. They assumed that I am a loner without friends just because I enjoy learning. I saw their stares, but I smiled back, yet we did not associate with each other. I have a habit of doing my work and concentrating on getting it correct which only adds to my stereotype.

Students who consistently care about their education are believed to miss out on a social life. After a while of my answering all the questions in math class though, the males started to rely on me. When no one knew the answers to the questions that my instructor asked, the males automatically would scream, “Ask Nicole, she always has the answers.” I find this to be like a stab in the heart while at the same time, a pat on the back. They know I am an achiever, but they look down on that quality.

I responded to this particular situation in the most mature way I could. I ignored them. It hurt me that my classmates could ignore my feelings and treat me as if they knew me personally. I decided that they can assume anything they wished about me, but that I would keep working to reach my full potential. Determined to reach my goal, I refused to let any group of people
influence me negatively. Whatever they said could not stop me from being who I want to be, a learner.

After a while of not acknowledging my classmates, they started to realize who I really am. They started to get to know my true personality. When they saw me out of class with my friends, they began to understand how I balance school and social time. After we started talking, they eventually asked me for help with math. One classmate who was failing began to excel after I helped him. I believe I did the right thing by ignoring my peers’ initial stereotyping of me because with time, they began to understand me. My response to their behavior helped everyone in the situation. I can still be motivated and the male students have learned to not judge people based on stereotypes. Over time, I think I helped people see the harm of stereotyping others.

Based on everything described, I think a clear message is present that everyone should learn. Stereotypes are false predictions that are harmful. Judging a person simply on a first impression or behavior is disrespectful.
Every day individuals are affected by society’s culture and stereotypes. Through many different ways, these two factors influence people to do things, either subconsciously or intentionally. One’s appearance is extremely significant to most people. Whether one is affected by appearing “correct” or by portraying oneself in a self-satisfying way, one still has to make that decision. Satisfying oneself or satisfying society, one needs to resist pressures of society’s culture and stereotypes.

It was a glorious day. The birds were chirping and the sun was shining over the opaque gray rocks. The shallow river flowed like wine as the scenery in its path was progressively altered. It was around two or three in the afternoon when three of my friends, my brother, and I arrived at Conesus Brook. We had driven from my friend E’s house, which was roughly over one-half a dozen miles away. We went to Conesus Brook to go on an adventurous hike. Our plan was to enjoy nature, to have fun talking about random experiences, and to anticipate what was going to happen that night.
As we stepped out of the minivan, we quickly began our journey into the woods and through the stream. The smell of pine trees and wet wood quickly filled our nostrils. The setting brought somewhat of a safe air to everyone. It was as if we were all more confident in each other’s competence. We stepped over floating logs, jumped from rock to rock, and climbed little cliffs. The hike was quite dangerous because if one took a wrong step or did not plant his feet in the right position, then he could slip and fall onto one of the sharp rocks below. Some of the flat rocks were unbelievably slippery. On the surface, they had about a centimeter of water mixed with mud and dirt, which made these smooth rocks appear brown. Sometimes these flat rocks would be elevated like a hill; it was tremendously difficult to hike up that kind of terrain. I fell several times as I ran through the river, but only had a few minor scratches on my calves. Despite all the risk of injury and our lack of caution, we were able to make it all the way up to this enormous waterfall.

For a moment, we debated whether we should turn around and return home, or find a way to the top of the falls. We sat on a ledge and rested for a while, socializing amongst ourselves. There were two ways up and over the waterfall: one was to simply climb it, which seemed fairly complicated, and the other was to take a path through the woods that went around the
waterfall. Nobody came to a conclusion except for my friend, J, who absolutely did not want to climb. He thought the idea was crazy. “That’s suicide!” he said. My brother and E, however, were the first to succeed at the climb. It took them a long time, but they were on top waving down. I made it halfway to the cascade, but then I paused. I thought to myself, “This surface is really slippery, I could fall and die.” I hesitated for fifteen minutes. My friends would have been so proud of me if I made it to the top. Then I thought, “But still, it’s not worth dying for.” Finally, I decided to get back down, which was not an easy descent.

As J and I started to hike up around the waterfall, we noticed our friend, R, attempting the climb. R made it to exactly where I had quit climbing when suddenly, his foot slipped. R began to fall, hitting seven sharp rocks before he slid on a curved ledge and fell into a pool of fresh water. We ran to his rescue and carried him back to the road where we called an ambulance.

Through many different ways, society’s culture and stereotypes affect peoples’ decisions. I almost gave into that kind of pressure, but my sense of reasoning and thinking of the consequences saved me from being summoned to that bravado. R, however, sadly suffered a concussion, had to get stitches on his head, and broke a few bones. It is wrong to give into the pressures
of society’s culture and stereotypes. If I had done so, I could have been in R’s unfortunate position.
Showbiz
Kelly Hayes

English 101, Fall 2007

Society exerts pressure on young people to look and act a particular way. It gives the impression that ladies have to be a certain weight, height, and body structure. For men, they are forced to have a masculine attitude and “a six-pack” set of abs. However, what is left for the rest of us who are not exposed to airbrushing and famous makeup artists? Does this mean that because we do not look a certain way, that we can not do the things we love? I knew this was how society judged people, but what I did not realize was that society was really no different from my own directors in grade school.

I have been involved in shows all of my life, whether they were dance recitals or theatrical performances; they were always a major part of my life. I always took some criticism because I was about five-foot seven -inches in sixth grade! (I have not grown much since then!) Nevertheless, directors, for the most part, judged me much more on talent than my appearance. This all changed though when I reached eighth grade. The musical that my grade school performed that year was “Grease.”
At the audition, my heart was beating so hard, I felt everyone’s eyes on me as I walked onto the stage. The lights were blinding bright and hot. The stage seemed to grow a mile long from the time I stood up until I reached my spot. Three directors were sitting directly in the middle of about fifty or sixty of my peers. When they told me I could begin, I took a deep breath, feeling all of my worries flush out of me when I exhaled. I was confident and ready because I knew that this part was made for me. As I opened my mouth, the words came out distinctly, and the notes sounded beautiful. When I was finished, a great sense of accomplishment mellowed on my shoulders, and I took my seat next to all of the other students.

One by one the other kids auditioned, and the night came to an end. Before I left, I wanted to find my director to ask her when the cast list would be posted; however, I discovered a conversation that I have never forgotten. Just before I reached the door, I overheard all three directors discussing me, and it was not my audition. Each one of them agreed that I was too tall, fat, and “big-boned” to ever have a lead in a school play. From then on, those words were burned into my memory. In complete tears, I bolted from the auditorium, and fell to my knees. Unfortunately, after that night, my outlook changed.
The next day when the cast list was posted, I frantically scrolled for my name, and eventually found it at the bottom of the last page in the “Chorus” section. Before I walked away, I made the decision to see who had succeeded in obtaining the role of Sandy. I turned back the page, and her name popped right out. It was the director’s daughter. She was thin, and tiny, but she had no voice. The anger began to rocket through my body, as I had never felt so terrible in my whole life.

I did my best at that audition, and I have no regrets. I went on in high school to have a minor lead in two, and a major lead in six of ten shows. That director’s daughter went on to high school to be in Chorus for four years. A mini-Hollywood atmosphere surrounded me throughout high school, and will for the rest of my life. At every audition I go to, however, I remember that night in eighth grade when I auditioned for “Grease.” No matter how much confidence I have in my vocal abilities and performance qualities, every time I walk onto stage for an audition, I suck in my stomach, push up my head, and remember that I am not perfect. That night forced me into a harsh reality of my body and appearance. That night scarred me forever.
Making It To College

Erin O'Shea

English 101, Fall 2007

My family and I moved from St. Louis, my birthplace, to Memphis, then to Maryland, and finally, to Pennsylvania. I think I found out about having Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) in elementary school. ADD can be identified as a learning disability causing one to have a harder time paying attention, and one may need medication to help stay focused. Besides having a difficult time paying attention, another obstacle can be dealing with relationship problems. I have found methods that work for me to cope with having ADD along with my moments of triumph throughout my journey to be successful. However, my family also went to a great extent to support me in my educational experiences. Between moving around and overcoming obstacles with ADD, I have made it to college.

Our first move was from St. Louis, Missouri to Memphis, Tennessee which was around 1990, and it is the beginning of the crazy story of my life. This is one of the first borders that I had to cross to overcome my obstacles. My speech was delayed, so I had to get speech therapy while I was living in
Memphis. I don’t really remember living in Memphis because I was little, but I do remember that we moved from Memphis to Maryland in 1994. Since having to move to Maryland, I had to adjust to meeting new people and to learning in a new school. After a while, I adjusted and managed to make new friends and do well in school up until third grade. With my ADD, I really started having problems academically in third grade. With ADD one might have a harder time focusing on schoolwork, and a little extra help might be needed. Also, to help focus better, a doctor may put one on medication like Ritalin or Adderall. I had adapted to living with ADD. Not only had I made new friends and become really close to them, but I had to do the same thing over again in a different state. To make matters worse, my family and I moved again -- to Pennsylvania -- in 1999 after the first-half of fourth grade.

Moving to Pennsylvania was one of the hardest experiences of my life. I finally had really good friends, but I had to leave them behind to go to yet another school, in another state, for the second half of fourth grade. I had to find myself again, adjust to a new school and make new friends, which are some transitions I have a hard time with, as I need to get comfortable around people before I can get to know them. Eventually, I became used to the new school and managed to make friends, but I
had more academic problems in fifth grade when I had a teacher who was harder and stricter than my fourth grade teacher. My fifth grade teacher would assign much homework and tests that my parents had to help me with because I did not know how to study properly. Somehow I managed to make it through fifth grade, yet that is when my parents realized that public school would not be a good fit for me. From middle school all the way through high school, I went to private school because the education was better for me.

When I went to Centreville School in Delaware, I was unsure how I would handle adjusting to the new school. Centreville is a small private school in Delaware with about 130 students. The students can go there from age five to 15, and it costs more than twenty-thousand dollars each year. However, it consists of a supportive staff to help the students who have learning disabilities prepare to make the transition to high school. When I first started there, I was really shy to the point where I would not even ask a question, and I struggled with my academics and making new friends because of it. Eventually, I gained more confidence and made many new friends. I even started doing better in my academics at Centreville; I learned the right way to study, and that I could do anything I put my mind to. I experienced numerous changes for the three years I was there.
went from being shy to delivering the graduation speech in 2003. If it were not for my parents and the staff at Centreville who never gave up on me, I do not know if I would be where I am today.

From Centreville, I made the transition to St. Mark’s High School in Wilmington, Delaware.

It was a change from 130 students at Centreville, to 1600 students at St. Mark’s. Once again, I felt as if I had to prove to everyone that I could do well at St. Mark’s, and I was surprised how quickly I adjusted to the large school environment. I made friends with people in different groups, but it was not until junior year when I found a close group of friends. People at school looked at me and made judgments about me based on my looks instead of getting to know me. I could tell when people looked straight at me that they were talking about me behind my back, and several rumors were spread about me, too. Eventually, I learned to just be me and not care what those people thought of me. My group of friends there was just awesome, especially my friend K, who just makes me laugh every time, and I have three other close friends, too. I had some good memories with my friends last year.

My senior year is something that I will never forget. My current group of friends is so special because they accept me for who I am, and they do not make any judgments about me. Eventually, I learned to just be me and not care what other people think of me.
With my academics at St. Mark’s, I still managed to get As and Bs, but I was being stubborn and would not accept any help with some of my assignments. Help was available at St. Mark’s, yet I was stubborn and thought I could be successful on my own. During junior year, I saw how lightly I was taking having ADD. During junior year after writing my research paper on ADD, I realized that I was not getting the help I really needed. I finally recognized how to deal with ADD in junior year, which helped my life change for the better. When I picked my classes for senior year, I actually signed up for a class called Emmaus which was a class that helped to prepare students for college. In this class, we learned different methods for taking notes, preparing for varied types of tests, and applying reading strategies to help make the transition to college. A method that is beneficial for me is writing things down, and using a dry-erase board to help me organize my assignments that need to get done. I also set personal goals with higher expectations to see if I can accomplish them. As a result of such strategies, I was accepted into all three of the schools to which I applied, and I set a personal goal to raise my GPA to a 3.5. Since I was able to accomplish my goals, I found that setting goals is one of my methods that works. Then my life changed for the better. Graduating from St. Mark’s last year has been another major accomplishment for me. Throughout this journey, I realize
how lucky I am to be where I am today because I have been given many opportunities to succeed, and the people around me will not give up on me. Also, I realize that I am lucky to be where I am today because my parents have spent close to $100,000 just for me to make the transition to college.

I have lived in four different states now and I have had to overcome obstacles with my ADD. For example, I had to have a tutor to help me prepare for the SAT critical reading since I have trouble with reading comprehension. I think it so cool how my tutor uses me as an example for her younger students preparing to make the transition to college. She tells the students that I was exactly like them, and how I was able to be successful by getting a 460 on my SATs for the critical reading section. I still struggle with relationship issues, but I know how to deal with such social issues now. I have family and friends around me who have been very supportive of how far I have come, and I feel as if I have become a better person. I have learned that if I work hard and do not give up when challenged, then I can achieve goals.
The Medical Miracle  
Katherine Stoughton  

English 101, Fall 2007  

Whenever I was out of school or my parents needed a babysitter, I would spend time with my mother’s parents. Consequently, I formed a unique bond with them. We would take day trips to different places, visit other relatives, and go fishing. Sometimes we would stay at my grandparents’ house and I would help them do things. My grandfather would let me help him in his workroom and in the yard. My mom and I would go to church every Sunday with my grandparents. I have vivid memories of sitting next to my grandfather every Sunday in church, listening to his voice while he sang the hymns. His voice was strong, as was he. I never doubted his strength; I considered my grandfather to be a healthy guy; after all, he was always working around the house or outside in the yard, and whenever he could, he would help his family. He always took time to talk to us about what was important in life. I learned many things from my grandfather, including something that I would soon need to use in order to keep from falling apart. He taught us that we should have a strong belief in God, stay true to our faith and incorporate prayer into our life because then even the most unbearable times will become
bearable. For ten years I had heard him say this, but I never really understood what it meant until, sadly, one day that changed.

As my mom and I were driving to the mall, we received an unexpected phone call from my Uncle Alan. This was the phone call that no one ever wants to receive. I could see the distress on my mother’s face and hear the shakiness in my uncle’s voice. As I listened to my mom ask my uncle questions, I knew immediately that something had happened to my grandfather. As we drove to my grandparents’ house to pick up my uncle, we passed the ambulance on its way to Chester County Hospital. Upon our arrival, we were told to be patient while my grandfather was registered and assessed in the Emergency Room. We were told to wait for the nurses to come out and get us. Minutes truly felt like hours. We were finally greeted by a nurse who showed us the way to my grandfather’s cubical. He looked so sick with all the wires and machines surrounding him. The nurses explained that he had been very fortunate, as the ambulance had arrived so quickly and treated him on the scene. He was expected to make a full recovery. For the next few days we visited him in the hospital. On the fourth day, the doctor told us that they were going to have to do a short procedure and place a stent in his heart to unblock his artery. After the doctor explained the procedure, my grandfather was taken to the Heart Catheter Lab where they
performed the procedure. My grandfather made a full recovery and was feeling much better by the end of that week. He was discharged on Saturday. We were so glad to take him home. I prayed all week for him to make a full recovery and to get better quickly. Our faith had been a great source of comfort during that week. Unfortunately, we did not know that this was only the beginning of Grandfather’s health problems.

Approximately two weeks after he had been released from the hospital, my grandmother noticed a yellow tint to my grandfather’s skin. He started to complain that he was not feeling well. After a few calls to his family doctor, my grandmother was told to take him to the Emergency Room. Again, we received another unwanted phone call; we immediately rushed to the hospital. We were told that my grandfather’s skin was jaundiced because he had pancreatitis. They hospitalized my grandfather and told us they wanted to perform a colonoscopy in order to check for any tumors. A colonoscopy is a procedure in which the doctor can closely look at the intestines and colon. It was so scary to think that my grandfather could have cancer. After several days passed, the doctors informed us that their predictions had been right. A cancerous tumor had been found on his bile duct. The doctors suggested that my grandfather be transported to the University of Pennsylvania Hospital, a place that deals with more serious
medical problems. The next day my grandfather was again released from the hospital. He was told to see his family doctor in the upcoming week to schedule an appointment with the surgeons at the University of Pennsylvania Hospital. My grandmother made all the appointments, as she was told to do.

Two weeks later, we drove my grandparents to the hospital to meet with the surgeon. I had butterflies in my stomach as we sat there and waited for the doctor. When the doctor finally came in, he explained that he wanted to do surgery to remove the tumor. He said the way to remove this kind of tumor to ensure that all the cancerous cells would be removed was to perform a Whipple operation. During this procedure, the head of the pancreas, a portion of the bile duct, the gallbladder, the duodenum, and possibly a portion of the stomach are removed. After removal of these structures, the remaining pancreas, bile duct, and the intestine are sutured into the intestine to direct the gastrointestinal secretions back into the stomach. We were all stunned into silence. This was a lot of information to absorb all at once. The doctor thought it would be best if we scheduled the surgery in two weeks. After scheduling the date, we took my grandparents home. We decided to bring everyone in the family together to explain the details of the surgery. It was not like a normal family get-together. At church that Sunday, my grandfather stood up during
the prayer request and asked the congregation for their prayers during this rough time. He explained what he would be going through and all the information about the surgery. The congregation immediately started to pray for his recovery. Knowing he had the prayers of our family, friends, and our congregation eased my grandfather’s fears, and he believed that everything would work out fine.

The night before the surgery, I prayed that everything was going to be okay, so I did not sleep well. As a result, I was exhausted when my mom woke me up at 5:00 a.m. to get ready, so we could pick up my grandparents. As my mom had to go to a meeting that morning, she was going to leave us at the hospital, and meet us there later in the afternoon. The surgery was 15 hours long. During the registration and the preparatory processes, I could see the worry and concern on my grandfather’s face. I just kept praying that everything was going to work out fine.

Finally, it was time for him to go into surgery. I was so nervous; my heart was in my throat, as they wheeled the gurney down the hall to the operating room. All of us were there-- his wife, his children and his grandchildren. As we waited, we watched television, played card games, read magazines, and ate. Never had time moved so slowly. We watched other families receive good news about their family members, then leave, and we
saw new families enter to wait for news. Finally, we received an update. He was doing well; the surgeons were concluding the operation. That was awesome news! It was such a relief to know that surgery was almost over. We were all in the waiting room talking when the doctor came in and asked to speak to the family of Albert Waters. As we all stood up, our hearts were in our throats.

The doctor told us that my grandfather was out of surgery and being transported to the ICU floor. He told us to head up to the ICU waiting room where we could see him once they settled him. Waiting was the last thing I wanted to do. However, we waited for about ten minutes when the nurse told us that we could see him two at a time. My uncle took my grandmother in first. When they came out, my grandmother said she did not want anyone else to see him because he had looked so horrible. She was afraid that we would all be very frightened. He was on a ventilator and had many machines and wires connected to him. As upset as I was about waiting all day to see him and then not being allowed, I respected my grandmother’s wish, knowing that my grandfather would not want how he looked to upset us. My grandmother assured me that we could see him tomorrow.

I still remember waking up extremely early the next day, excited that it was the day I was going to see my grandfather.
I had so many emotions running through me at the time. I was just hoping and praying that he would recover as quickly as possible. As I walked into the hospital that morning, I felt a sense of relief knowing I was finally going to see him. The ride in the elevator to his floor seemed never ending. When we walked into the ICU, we washed our hands, and then were allowed to see him. The nurses told us that he had experienced a good night without complications.

For the next two weeks, we visited him daily as he recovered and slowly became aware of his surroundings. He was in the hospital for a total of three weeks. When we brought him home, he still had drainage bags and an IV. I stayed at my grandmother’s house for the next week to help her care for him. He stayed downstairs in a hospital bed that had been delivered to the house. I was so relieved that he was finally home and getting back to normal. A few weeks later we took him back to the hospital for a one month check up. They said that the tubes were ready to come out, and if he was willing to take antibiotics in the form of a pill, then they would take his IV out as well. I was so relieved to hear the good news! My grandfather would now go through physical therapy to learn how to use his stomach muscles again. After months of rehabilitation and follow-up hospital visits, my grandfather was finally given a clean bill of health.
Throughout his long, stressful medical journey, I learned the lesson that my grandfather had tried to teach me. If you have a strong belief in God, stay true to your faith, and incorporate prayer into your life, even the most unbearable times can be bearable. If you trust your faith and rely on God to help you, all things are tolerable. Looking back on this situation, I know that my whole family felt comfort and gained strength from their faith and from all the people who were praying for my grandfather’s safe and speedy recovery. When things in life get tough, you need to ask God for help, and He will help. So here is my challenge to you: the next time you find yourself in an intolerable situation and you need help, pray to God and have hope and faith that good things will happen. After all, if you pray and hope for the best, what is the worst that can happen?
Exactly one year ago, I was on a returning flight home from Honolulu, Hawaii. I had been there, living and working on a cruise ship for six consecutive months. I had applied for the job because I had been deeply depressed months earlier, and had wanted to get away from my hometown. I knew that Hawaii was going to be a beautiful place where I was going to have a fun time working, but what I did not know was that my time in Hawaii would provide me with the greatest gift of all – a sense of who I am.

I left on a Monday morning during the first week of September. I was incredibly scared and increasingly anxious about what was soon to be my new home. When I stepped off the airplane, I could feel the hot air press against my face. On the island, the plants were stunning, and the ocean sparkled. I could already feel the happiness of the island.

The ship looked amazing. It was one of the biggest structures I had ever seen, measuring almost three football-fields long. As I walked up the platform toward the opening on the enormous ship, my eyes widened, and I could not even imagine
how I was going to find my way around. Once inside, I was given a tour and later shown to my room.

The following day, I immediately started my new job. I was amazed at how many wonderful people I met. I lived and worked with people from all over the United States who were from all different cultures and backgrounds. Living in such close quarters helped me to learn how to interact with, and fully understand the views of different people. I was able to spend precious time with my new friends and learn so much about this different island on which I was now living. On certain days, if timed allowed, we were able to spend time tanning, snorkeling, and surfing at any of the many beaches.

One particular day, I was able to sneak off on my own to a volcano named Kilauea, off the coast of the big island of Hawaii. It was a long hike around the outer area of the active volcano. The air was extremely foggy, and there were gigantic craters everywhere. As I continued walking, the smell of sulfur became stronger and stronger. As I moved closer to the coast, there were signs leading me to the end of the path, and I realized that I was now walking on hardened lava. It felt as if I was on some other planet. It was about a two-hour hike on that lava until I made it to the very end of the trail. I had never felt more accomplished. I had never felt prouder of myself. As I gazed at
the ocean, I could see bright red lava flowing into the water. The sun was setting as I closed my eyes and prayed. A sense of success came over my entire being. At that moment, I had found myself. I realized then that I knew who I was, and where I belonged, so I realized that it was time for me to return home.

Before I journeyed to Hawaii, I was sad, lost, and confused. My experiences in Hawaii though showed me how great a person I really am, and how great other people can be. I know who I am now, and I am not afraid to be that person. I probably never will find a place more colorful, beautiful, and magical as Hawaii. My awesome experiences there changed my outlook on life.
Different Era, Different Jobs

Maria Kash

English 101, Fall 2007

A job is one of the most important purposes that a person can have. Jobs provide more than money; they provide confidence and self-esteem. I decided to interview my grandmother Widad Kash, and ask her what her job was when she was a teenager. She is currently 78 years old and living in Malvern, Pennsylvania. She was born in Ramallah, Palestine, and moved to America when she was 42 years old. In Palestine the jobs were very different from those in America. One of her most influential jobs, she told me, was one she had when she was seventeen. It is not the “normal” average job that a seventeen-year-old would have today. The culture, values, and morals in Palestine are different from those of America.

The first question I asked my grandmother (Teteh in Arabic) was what her first job was, and she laughed when I asked her this, as she did not know where to begin. When she told me, I was shocked because it was a very unusual job for a teenager. Teteh explained that she was a school teacher, as where she was raised, the older teenagers assisted with teaching the younger students. She taught composition, geography, and science. The
students did not move from class to class, as they only had one teacher. Originally, she only wanted to help out at the school, but the nuns decided to hire her full time.

My second question was what she liked about her job. Her voice had a joyful tone to it. She was excited to tell me all the details. She loved her job, and the students. She loved teaching the children. She was extremely patient, so she portrayed the qualities of being a good teacher. Another reason she loved her job was the atmosphere, as everyone was happy, always with smiles on their faces. She liked the other teachers and children. Everyone had respect and courtesy for one another.

The next question I asked Teteh concerned the pay rate. Then the worth and appreciation of money were much different than today’s. She would get nine dollars each month. If I were to tell someone that nowadays, they would seem very confused. Sixty years ago though that was considered good pay. I asked Teteh how she could live on nine dollars each month, and she explained she could in fact live well on three dollars for that time. I was shocked because there is no way in today’s world that a person could live on three dollars each month. It is impossible. I learned that items and services were cheaper then, and there were not as many materialistic needs, as there are now. They did not
buy unnecessary items as people tend to do today. They were happy and content with nine dollars each month.

When I asked Teteh about her boss, her response surprised me. She did not have a boss, as there were no bosses at the school then. The older nuns were basically the bosses, and if she ever needed anything, she would go to them. She looked up to them because they taught her what she needed to know, and helped her get started. She had a good relationship with them. She confided in the nuns, knowing that she could talk to them anytime. I asked her if she had any dislikes about her job, and surprisingly, unlike responses from my peers, she had nothing but positive comments about her role. Every peer of mine, though, whom I surveyed had a specific complaint about their jobs. Teteh quit her teaching job when the war started, as the schools were forced to shut down. The war in 1948 was between the Palestinian and Jewish people.

The results of these survey questions show differences in responses by my peers about their jobs now, and by my grandmother about her job when she was a teen many years ago. Major factors that contribute to these differences are morals, values, and upbringing. I learned that when Tetah was young, one could live on earnings of nine dollars each month. In a sense, I
feel that such experiences as Teteh’s make people appreciate when they have more. My grandmother’s work experience in another culture differs from that of most young people. She had much more responsibility when she was younger than teenagers have today. She stopped working not only because of the war, but also because she became engaged when she was eighteen-and-a-half.

I enjoyed asking Teteh questions about her job. I learned more about my culture and how it was when she was a teenager. I felt privileged to listen to her story about being a teacher. I am happy that she loved what she was doing because it made her job more enjoyable for her. The joyful experiences as a teacher made her want to work and wake up every morning happy. My grandmother’s story taught me to appreciate life and the opportunities that I have.
The unveiling of the masterpiece entitled “Dennett Brian West” reveals a collage of people, experiences, and cultural identity. One of the most important aspects of identity is a person’s name. My mother’s gift of love to my father was naming me, her firstborn son after him. My dad and I were named in honor of my grandfather, Dennett Delroy Lindo who immigrated to America from Kingston, Jamaica. The origin of Dennett can be traced back to France. The variation of the spelling and frequent use of Dennett as a surname started with d’Anet (Dennett, 2007). The French meaning of Dennett is “narrow valley” (Dennett, 2007).

The most influential person in my life, my mother, desired for me to become an evangelist, so she came up with her own definition for my name Dennett, meaning “fisher of men’s souls.” Dr. Best, my pastor, confirmed that assertion by calling me into my destiny as a future preacher of God’s words. I remember one time at church when Dr. Best instructed me to pray over the tithes. After praying over the tithes and offerings, the meaning of my name began to take shape. To me, the “narrow valley”
meaning of my name represents my life’s journey, being an upright man walking in the straight and narrow path of God’s words. Surprisingly, a historic event is linked to the Dennett family, which deals with faith in God. It dates back to the Coat of Arms where the Dennett Christian soldiers prayed for the rain, and God provided rain needed to defeat their enemies. Because of the significant victory, the soldier’s symbol of a shield with a rain drop is used to honor God’s grace and mercy on the Dennett’s family (Dennett, 2007).

My personal experiences with my first name were not a pleasant one; they were nothing less than embarrassing. In elementary school, I first remember how effortlessly the teachers would call the names of the other students. I would rest my head on the desk, impatiently waiting for the teacher to mispronounce my name, thus sending my classmates into uncontrollable bursts of laughter. When the teachers finally came to my name, their eyes would widen awkwardly, as they stared at that attendance sheet while trying to pronounce my name under their breath.

“Dennetta,” “Dennae,” or “Dennette,” the teachers called out in search for a girl to raise her hand, or say “Here.” The teachers were slightly embarrassed when I said, “Present.” Imagine my pain! My curiosity about why my parents named me, Dennett, a rare and un-American name only fed my envy after my parents
named my younger sibling. David Jeffrey West, my brother, was named after both of my uncles on my mother’s and father’s side. Briana Mercedes West, my sister, was named after the BMW, my dad’s favorite car.

I no longer wanted the constant reminder of my unique first name. I started telling my teachers to address me as Brian. What I went through is subtly different from what Itabari Njeri experienced in “What’s in a Name.” Both of us chose names that reflected our cultural identity. Njeri wanted her name to reflect her African heritage (Njeri, 1989/2008). I guess I wanted a name that allowed me to assimilate into the masses of America. My middle name, Brian, made experiences like school so much simpler. Brian means “strong and honorable” and originated from Celtic Irish (Campbell, 2008).

As a result, I view my personal and cultural identity as a collaboration between Africans and Americans through intermarriage. Richard Rodriguez (1982/2008) in “Public and Private Language” and Itabari Njeri (1989/2008) in “What’s in a Name” analyzed the loss of intimacy and cultural identity by assimilating into the masses. Rodriguez argued that to become an individual among the masses, he had to lose his native language of Spanish (Rodriguez, 1982/2008). However, Njeri believed that her
former “slave name Jill” had no direct connection to her cultural identity as an African-American woman (Njeri, 1989/2008).

I believe that the forced intermarriage between Africans and Americans during slavery gave birth to my new identity. Once my ancestors began to read and speak English, they became joint heirs in the American inheritance of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. These became my cultural possessions through the victory of the North in the Civil War and by the effects of the Civil Rights Movement. These historic events also intermingled, transformed, and changed my identity into an African-American.

In conclusion, my masterpiece entitled “Dennett Brian West” reveals more than myself; it displays the history of my family, the accomplishments of my ancestors, and my blended identity of being both African and American. Those ancestors, both black and white, gave their lives so that I could have freedom. I will not dishonor their legacies by being partial in my cultural identity.

References


Photo by G. Corso of “Sphere within a Sphere” sculpture by Italian sculptor, Arnaldo Pomodoro, at United Nations, N.Y.
What Does Your Name Mean?

Maria Kash

English 101, Fall 2007

A name not only suggests a person’s identity, but it distinguishes them from other people. When couples find out they are going to have a baby, they are overwhelmed and excited. After they hear the good news, they automatically start thinking of names, which can cause some conflict between parents. The father may want his son to be named after him, or the mother may wish her son to be named after her father. Many conflicts may arise between parents and their families about choosing a child’s name.

There are different kinds of names all around the world. My name is not ordinary. Due to my background, my middle name is not the easiest to pronounce and understand. My full name is Maria Widad Ossama Kash. My first name has a lot of meaning, as my parents decided to name me after the Virgin Mother Mary. Some people refer to her as “Mary,” “Maria,” and “Miriam.” My mom loved the name “Maria,” and she wanted her first daughter to be named after the Blessed Mother. My father loved that name, and he was happy they both agreed and were satisfied. My mom was told she was going to have a boy. My
parents were not prepared to have a girl, so they had a boy’s named
selected, which would be my father’s dad’s name. In Arabic
culture, that is what would be expected. When I looked up the
meaning of Maria, the sources said it means “bitter”
(http://babynames.com/Names/search_result.php). It was shocking
because I am far from bitter. The sources also mentioned Mary’s
name, and how some people refer to her as Maria. I am pleased I
am named after the Virgin Mary.

In addition, middle names are usually easy to decide
among parents. Most families take their grandfather’s names as
their child’s middle name. My mom was going to name me
“Maria Jean” after her because she is called “Jeannie” even though
her real name is Delores. So it would have been Maria Jean
Ossama Kash. Instead, my father said he wanted to have his
mother’s name. My grandmother’s name is “Widad,” which is not
a name one hears every day. When I looked up Widad, there was
not much information about it. I looked under Arabic names and it
When I found out, I loved the name even more and embraced the
fact that I am named after my grandmother. In school when people
would ask, What is your middle name?, I would be ashamed to tell
them because it was not a known name, but now I am proud and
honored to answer that common question.
In the Arabic culture, a name includes one's first name, then middle, and then one’s father’s name which follows to identify the family one is from, and one’s father. For example, if two brothers were named after their grandfather, they would use their father’s name as one of their middle names. If someone were to ask the person’s name, they would not be able to know who their father was by just knowing their last name. The middle name signifies who they are and who their father is. Another example would be the scenario of my uncle’s sons. My uncle has three boys and my father has none. If my father had a boy, then the name would be confusing because people would think the cousins would have the same father. Having their father’s middle name signifies who their father is. In Arabic, Ossama means “lion.”

Having that name can stir conflict among people because of 9/11. I usually do not tell people my full name because of the questions and explanations. Ossama is a beautiful name and before 9/11 it was just another unique name. It is gratifying that I also have my father’s name as part of my middle name.

Surnames are distinctive because people usually look at someone’s last name to distinguish their background. My last name “Kash” is hard to identify for most people. There was great difficulty in trying to find the meaning of Kash and the background of it. In one of my sources, the name is explained that it could be
German and Jewish in origin (Ancestry.com). When I asked my father, he told me the story behind it. About 500 years ago, there was a man in Yemen whose legs were very skinny like straws, tall, and thin. In Arabic, Kash means “skinny,” so people started calling him Kash. Therefore, that is the story generalized and shortened. When my father told me the story, I thought it was very interesting and fascinating.

Overall, I have learned not to be ashamed of my name because it is beautiful and it identifies who I am and where I come from. Maria meaning the “Virgin Mary,” Widad meaning “love,” Ossama meaning “lion,” and Kash meaning “skinny.” My parents did a good job of naming me, and I am happy with my name. I would never change a thing about my name. I am proud that I am named after such amazing people.

References


Identity

Amanda Lau

English 101, Fall 2007

Identity captures who you are, where you have come from, what you have accomplished, and where you are going. It specifically defines you, your background, your ethnicity, your label, and what has happened that has made you who you are as a person. Your identity creates your personality. It molds you into who you are, and it can push you further to achieve your goals. For example, my mom is a mother, a friend, a sister, a wife, a hard worker, a college student, a drama queen, and a homemaker. She came from very little, but made a lot for herself. Her strong family ties made her into a family person. Family parties occur frequently for all occasions to stay close. Her parents encouraged her to succeed in school, so not only did she receive one degree, she returned for another. Her background has formed her identity and encouraged her to succeed. She has used her identity to shape my personality and who I have become. Succeeding in school and keeping family close relate to my identity. My personality, and the things I value are part of my identity. Attaching materialistic values to an identity is pointless.

My identity is not my social security number. By stealing someone’s identity, it only means stealing bank account
numbers. It has nothing to do with who you are, but only your material possessions. Numbers can get attached to your identity. A cell phone number or a zip code or an address could be confused with your identity. Where a person’s from or what their phone number is has nothing to do with the person’s character. A dorm building number or a hallway number can not express your feelings or describe an identity. The amount of money in a pocket does not describe a person’s worth.

Where I come from makes me a strong person with a strong personality and high self-esteem. I am a strong person who is anything but passive. Everyone in my family takes conflict seriously. Being passive or aggressive is part of your identity. How you handle situations, by talking it out or throwing punches is part of your identity.

By being a high school graduate I have defined part of my identity. Getting through the tougher times personally and socially was a challenge for all graduates, but those who made it have already moved on to bigger and better experiences. It has been proven that by graduating from college, one is guaranteed a better job with higher pay than that for a high school graduate. Going to college and graduating guarantee rewards.
I am on my way to accomplish goals. My thriving to succeed defines my identity. Having the will to work hard for self improvement can characterize a person. Slackers rarely get far in the business world because they lack the drive or willpower to do anything for themselves. My identity includes striving to better myself. Obstacles are only there to make me stronger, and by overcoming them, I can attain a sense of pride. Henry Ford said, “Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off your goal.” Having a goal sets the standard for what a person may want to accomplish. By having a goal in mind, I know what I am working towards, and I know what I have to accomplish to get there. This is my identity as a first-year college student, who values family ties and success in my studies.
What is it that makes some people look forward to going to work more than others? Is it the atmosphere of the job, or the mindset and work ethic of a worker? The experience of the job tends to vary due to elements, such as the attitude of the worker, or certain qualities that the worker possesses to make him or her better at a job. The factors that contribute most to a satisfying job are learning from mistakes, visualizing each task, and working well under pressure.

For employees to have a fulfilling work experience, they must be able to learn from their mistakes or the mistakes of others. In Malcolm Gladwell’s essay, “The Physical Genius,” he states that neurosurgeon, Charlie Wilson, used cadavers and watched his friend perform surgeries as a learning experience after hearing that the previous surgeon had made a mistake during the procedure (270). Today Wilson is one of the best and most widely-known neurosurgeons in the United States. Even workers, such as waitresses use this idea to perfect their skills. Mike Rose in “The Working Life of a Waitress” claims that when his mother was a
waitress, she like the other workers would watch and learn from one another’s mistakes. If they keep practicing to perfect routines and to avoid mistakes, the job becomes much simpler, Rose explains (279). When workers make mistakes, the only way to imagine how to avoid them is to practice the routine, maybe even to the point of obsession. As Gladwell argues, “a practical-minded obsession with the possibility and consequence of failure” is needed for a person to ultimately succeed (271). I find that mistakes can be transformed into future knowledge. To correct mistakes or to avoid them, people must practice until the skills become second nature. As a child when I was learning how to play sports, I would make mistakes. However, I always used them as learning opportunities, and I would practice until I perfected my skills. In some ways, I was compulsive, but ultimately, it was worth my time. Having a compulsive attitude, Gladwell argues, causes workers to “practice over and over again, until even the smallest imperfections are ironed out…. [which] creates consistency and changes the way a task is perceived” (272). Practicing until mistakes are perfected is only one of the key elements that leads to a rewarding job. Workers can acquire a sense of achievement and success after they overcome a challenge in their job.
A job also becomes satisfying when workers begin to visualize their tasks because they practice so much. Rose describes the mental processes of a waitress who can visualize the environment and the customers, and as time goes on, she can “more or less make a picture in her mind,” so she remembers customers by their “physical appearance, physical features, and attitude or gender distinction” (280). When she has such a mental image, it is easier for the server to recollect which table or person ordered a certain dish. When I was a waitress at an assisted-living facility, I used to remember orders by keeping in mind how people dressed, or if they used a wheelchair. Sometimes I would remember if the person were male or female. This visualization process helps to keep the job running smoothly and easily.

According to Gladwell, the people who are the most successful at their jobs also “chunk” information. “Chunking,” Gladwell explains, “is based on the fact that we store familiar sequences in long-term memory as a single unit, or chunk” (273). “Chunking” is different from imagination because it is how people analyze a situation, not how they proceed. When Wayne Gretzky, the ice hockey player, used “chunking,” Gladwell argues that “he wasn’t seeing all eleven players individually; he was seeing only chunks” (273). He would observe the ice and pass the puck to the exact place where he wanted it to reach. By visualizing his plans to
decide where to put the next play, Gretzky was able to become known as one of the top-scoring players in the NHL. Like top-performing athletes, highly competent surgeons visualize problems and mentally rehearse solutions. Neurosurgeon Charlie Wilson also uses “chunking” while performing surgeries. He takes time “visualizing the entire procedure and each potential outcome in advance,” so when he does the actual procedure, it is “like doing it for the second time” (Gladwell 274). When people can envision what they want to do, it makes their work less difficult; this mental rehearsal causes the worker to enjoy work instead of feeling stressed out and overwhelmed if they confront the unexpected.

The final factor that contributes to a fulfilling work experience includes an understanding about working well under pressure. When I worked at the assisted-living facility, I felt more motivated, and I accomplished more when there was a rapid pace at work. However, during lulls, I moved slower and would tend to forget things. Rose might explain my experience through the example of the waitresses who claim that “they work best when the restaurant is busy…. [because y]ou’re not as alert… not thinking that quick” when business is slower (282). It is easier to stay focused under pressure because there is no time to fall behind and make a mistake. Workers are more likely to be more careful and precise to avoid making errors. Gladwell demonstrates this idea by
discussing the surgeon, Charlie Wilson. When Wilson performs an operation with aneurysms that are surrounded by nerves and blood vessels, he is under much pressure. This pressure helps him work quickly and more importantly, adeptly, so he does not hit any major parts of the brain that might harm the patient (274). This extreme pressure helps the professional do the job correctly on the first try, instead of having to go back and redo the task. It makes workers feel more accomplished after they act in an alert and careful manner to complete a task well on the first attempt.

When people feel the most fulfilled from a work experience, an analysis of their behaviors shows how they see work as occasions to learn from mistakes and practice techniques. They visualize their plan of action, and they work well under pressure. When a worker fulfills these factors, he or she will become a more efficient worker, one who will have a more enjoyable work experience. Instead of dreading the long work day that lies ahead, people can look forward to work as sites for new learning experiences with obstacles to overcome each day.

Works Cited

REFLECTIVE ESSAYS
This semester, I have written so many essays that I thought my arm was going to fall off. I was in the library every day of this semester, and I guarantee, on most days I was working on an essay. Whether it was an English essay, English learning logs, or an essay for any of my other classes, there was always something to write. Although it was a lot of work and there were some essays I did not enjoy writing at all, I did learn something from each of them. Some essays taught me a new writing skill or helped me work on an old one. I even learned a whole new documentation format, the APA style.

The first English essay that I wrote this semester was based on an essay written by Barbara Wallraff. It was a short essay and one of the easier ones that I have done this semester. When I handed the paper in, I was not sure what to expect. After all, this was my first English paper for college, and I was not sure what grading would be like. When it was returned, I was relieved to find out that my instructor was similar to the English teacher that I had my junior year of high school. The grading was exactly same. Generally, class grades were low, but he offered much
constructive criticism that would make the rewrites better. The C+
I had received on that paper was not good enough for me, so I
rewrote it, learning from the grammar mistakes and fixing the
wording so it sounded clear and more professional. I passed the
rewrite with an A-, which was much more acceptable.

The next paper involved actual research; it was a
descriptive-narrative essay. I had never written this kind before, so
I was nervous about writing the paper. I collected all of my
research and followed the example given to us as much as I could.
I was still uneasy about the quality of the paper when I turned it in.
I did better on this paper than I expected; I received an A-. Even
though I received a good grade on the paper, I had learned
something from it. Not only did I learn about a new kind of
writing, but I also learned some words that I should not use in a
paper because they were considered informal. This paper was also
the first in which a ‘References’ page was needed, so I was able to
practice the new format of referencing that I was trying to learn,
APA. The References page for this paper was not the greatest and
I had much to fix, but I was able to learn from my mistakes for
next time.

The next paper was my favorite. The Cause & Effect
essay about the Titanic was so much fun to write because it was a
topic about which I enjoyed researching. When I was writing that
paper, it was as if the words just flew out of my hands onto the paper. I turned it in with a sense of pride; I felt that I had done an excellent job. I was slightly disappointed to get the paper back with a B+ on it. Though this is a good grade, I was unsure as to what I did wrong to earn that grade. My paper was overall very well done; the place where I had most of the points taken from was where I did not cite information that was supposed to be cited. I was unaware that one should have to cite all information that is not considered common knowledge, so I had not cited much information. I learned that lesson, so I knew what needed to be revised and what did not. I had done a little better on my APA formatting, but I still had a way to go on perfecting that technique.

The last paper I wrote for my English class was a position paper. I wrote something like this in my high school, but not very often, so I did not have much practice. The argument essay was about same-sex marriage. Initially, I had trouble finding information, but eventually, I found enough to write a decent paper. I turned it in not knowing what to expect. My grade was a C. I knew that was not good enough, so I examined what I needed to rewrite. There were many grammar errors that I could easily fix, and there were sections that needed to be completely rethought and reworked. This was the hardest to rewrite, but it was worth it. I received a B+ on the revised copy with perfect APA formatting.
As I reflect upon this semester, I am amazed at the growth in my writing skills. If you compare a paper that I had written two years ago to a paper written this semester, you would see great improvement. Even my introductions and conclusions, which were my weak points when I started this class, have become easier to write. Each essay has taught me something new, from my first response essay to my final position paper. All of these essays taught valuable lessons that I will use throughout college and beyond, all learned in this one semester.
Throughout my high school years, I considered myself
to fall short of being a writer. English was certainly not one of my
favorite subjects because my grades always seemed to be below
average. Even when I received help from teachers or other
students on how to improve my writing skills, I felt as if each
attempt was unsuccessful. If I had the option between writing and
presenting a topic orally, I would choose to talk about the certain
subject because it is much easier for me. However, I feel as
though this English class did make a difference in my writing skills
because of the many exercises that were available to show how I
can improve my writing ability.

As a writer, the most important learning outcomes
involve demonstrating the ability to think creatively, reflectively
and critically, and also being able to write prose characterized by
unity, continuity, maturity of thought, and the use of Standard
English. These outcomes are what I try to improve because before
his class, I tended to ignore pre-writing and collecting my thoughts
before I began to write. Being able to free write, participate in
class activities, and have peer reviews from others students and
also the instructor improved my writing. When I am given a writing assignment, I now take the time to think about the certain topic or issue, then I plan, and pre write, processes, I realize which help me to stay focused when I write or revise.

When I write, it is hard for me to keep things in my head long enough to get them down on paper. When I speak about a topic, it is so much easier to get my point across, but when I have to write about the topic, it becomes frustrating, and I want to give up. Through using outlines, however, I found a way to keep me focused. For example, using graphic organizers or rubrics helped me to write about a certain topic because I had a guideline on what was needed for the writing assignment to be complete.

I developed as a writer when getting feedback from my instructor. When students would read my work and edit it themselves, I felt that it was not as effective because they were students just like me. However, when my writing instructor would review my work and comment on it, I felt that it helped me significantly because I was getting the best review on how to improve my paper. After completing many writing assignments, I noticed that my writing began to improve drastically because I saw why I needed to add examples, rethink the placement of ideas, and proofread my sentences. I then could revise my writing.
Having a good instructor really does make a difference in my writing, too, because I can learn new ways to organize my thoughts and to better understand all the aspects of the writing process. I have much more confidence in my writing now than I did as a high school student. For me writing is something that I know I really have to work hard to improve. Before this class, I had believed that some people are born writers, but I did not consider myself to be one of those people. Now, however, I recognize how much labor good writing takes, and I have learned how to revise my writing based upon feedback.

Aside from learning how to plan better and to revise my writing from peer and instructor feedback, I recognize the importance of where I write. The best environments for me to develop as a writer are in quiet areas with no distractions. However, living on campus is a challenge because people are running in and out of rooms, and loud music usually is playing. Something always seems to be going on in the residence halls. With all of these distractions, I had to find a place where I could concentrate, and I found that place to be Neumann’s library. When I am in a place with no interruptions, I can really focus on my writing, giving it my full attention.
This semester I also learned that I enjoy writing. One of my strongest, enjoyable writing experiences was a personal narrative. When I write about my own personal experiences, I put much thought and meaning into my work. I explain clearly what it is I am describing or explaining, and I give examples to make my work seem alive. The narrative essay, “My Personal ‘Crossed-Border’” is my favorite essay that I completed in English class because I enjoyed writing about myself. I believe I became a better writer after completing this essay because I had more confidence in my writing, and when revising it, I was able to see where I needed to improve.

After this first semester of college English, I believe I developed as a writer for the best. I came a long way from not liking writing at all initially to being able to enjoy it to some extent. I did improve from the beginning of this semester, but I know that I still have much to learn. There is always room for improvement.
Happily Ever After

Emily Tooker

English 094: Successful Writing, Fall 2007

Once upon a time there was a princess who came from afar to find her fairy godmother to help her with a problem. All this godmother had to do was wave her wand over the head of the princess and all of her problems would go away. In the real world, however, one must work for solutions to problems. This semester in English class, Emily, a writing princess in the making, had to re-learn the basics of writing and grammar, and the work was not easy. There was no fairy godmother to wave a magic wand to help. Instead, she had a teacher who helped her to discover a writing talent that she never knew she had. What would it be like to write her own fairy tale with Emily, the Princess, and her writing talent, the Prince?

Before writing the tale, however, she had to learn how to be descriptive, which she did by describing the beautiful convent near her school. Once she stepped inside the large building, her pen brought to life every word Emily chose to describe such a wonderful place. She got all the words out of her system, and she put them into proper sentences. After she wrote
The paragraph, she could picture everything she had described about the convent in her head. She felt that the paragraph was from her dreams because it was so splendid. Only magic could have made the words as beautiful as the place. The first step of her fairy tale was complete, and she thought that she might indeed have a happily-ever-after in her life with writing.

Emily wrote more papers on other topics, but the comparison and contrast essay was her big battle against the wicked witch. For a while she thought this essay would steal Prince Talent away. It took time and hard work to be in charge of this essay, but she thought she could beat the wicked witch on this one. The essay was hard to organize because there were so many things to compare and contrast about a topic. This was an uphill battle because she had to decide on a theme for the essay. Emily felt like the princess who battled the witch for her prince, the elusive writing talent. Once she selected the right topic to compare and contrast, she could win the prince back for a while until that witch returned. She knew what the last battle was going to be before she could marry the prince and live happily ever after. Grammar and sentence composition would be her biggest challenge.
The battle with sentence structure and grammar was worse than the one with the evil witch. In fact, it was more like a dragon that would not go away until Emily worked diligently with a tutor. She had not thought that she could win this battle as well, or as quickly as she did. Her battle with grammar will never be completely ended, but she could take a break for a little while until the next enemy appeared. The dragon came back one last time because of some unfinished business with sentence composition and grammar. This battle was not as long as the first one, but Princess Emily thought that she had finally nipped the dragon in the bud, so he would not be back again for a long time.

After the battles with the wicked witch and the dragon, Emily felt that she had learned much about herself and her writing with the help of her fairy godmother who had come with her magic. This magic was not a wand over Emily’s head, but the tools to improve her writing that helped her to produce the best work that she could. Emily’s fairy tale came to life as the princess finally got her prince, and they lived happily ever after.
Letter To an Incoming Freshman
Amanda Lau

English 101, Fall 2007

Dear Incoming Freshman,

College is going to be the time of your life, so enjoy it! Do not fret the small things, and do not stress out about the workload. If I can do it, so can you! Challenge yourself, but know your limits. You do not want to get frustrated because you are overwhelmed. At Neumann there are many people who want to help you in any way that they can.

Neumann College offers many ways to get involved. So get involved! Make sure that you go to sporting events because they are great fun, and it is a great way to meet new people. By cheering for the same cause, you will feel as if you are a part of the College. It will keep you busy, and more importantly, it will keep you out of trouble. Having a job on or off campus is another way to keep you focused, keeping you out of trouble.

Not only is Neumann fun, but also, it offers resources to help you succeed. Use the ARC as often as possible. Schedule appointments to have your papers reviewed long before their due dates. The ARC staff members give great advice. Go to the
library when you need to study. Bringing friends may make it more fun, but going alone will give you the quiet time you need to get your work done. By hiding upstairs at a table, you are assured of that quiet time to get your work done. Your instructors are there to help.

My main reason for going to Neumann was that it is a small school where your professors know your name, and they know how you are doing in your class. Do not be surprised when a professor sees you in the hallway and remembers your name. Make use of your instructors’ office hours. Set up appointments to discuss papers or your progress in their class. Be sure to take advantage of how available your professors are.

Expect the best, but plan for the worst. Expect your classes to be challenging, but prepare yourself to study at least three hours each day. My classes are manageable, yet challenging. I study for an average of three hours each night, and many more before a test. Expect yourself to be ready for a test, but plan ahead for it by allotting extra time to study. Plan to study every night.

If you live on campus, prepare to have some sort of roommate issue. Your picture-perfect roommate may not be the person with whom you are paired. Remember to always be respectful, and never interfere with your roommate’s sleep.
schedule. I have heard of entirely too many instances where rooms had to be changed because of roommate disagreements. My first roommate only spent the night twice before she decided that college was not for her, and she left. Having the room to myself has spoiled me a lot. Another roommate with very different views about meeting new friends switched rooms because of our differences. Now, however, I have the best roommate ever, a nursing major like me who helps me a lot. While roommates can be a challenge, you will learn something from each person whom you meet.

You may hear how partying may be fun, but it is never worth it. Just do not do it. Off-campus parties always get raided. You do not need an underage drinking charge on your record. Be smart, be safe, and do not risk losing all that you are working toward.

Make time for yourself. The weeks before college are exciting and terrifying at the same time. Do something that you love to do to get away from it all for a while. If you live at home, take the dog for a walk, go for a run, or watch a movie with friends. Whether living at home or on campus, keep in touch with the people who mean the most to you. Do not neglect family members or friends from high school just because you leave for
college. Make time to call a friend to see how he or she is doing. It is very important to make new friends at college, but the old friends, those who know your personal history, are just as important.

Spiritually you need to stay close with your faith. If that means saying a quiet prayer before bed or going to mass every Sunday, make sure you make time to do it. The campus grounds allow for a great place to just be alone and take a break from everything. The grounds are gorgeous, and you feel very close to nature when you go. It may be just the thing you need to brighten your day after a rough week.

This first year at Neumann has allowed me to grow. My parents have never been prouder of me while I have been here. My classes are challenging, but I have managed to get all As and only one B so far this year. My parents brag about me to friends and family, and that is the best feeling ever. When you succeed at something, make sure you tell your family. They will be just as happy as my parents for me, and that feeling is indescribable. That is the best kind of satisfaction you can get.

College is a rollercoaster. One minute you are on top of the world because you aced a test, but the next you could be down in the dumps because of a roommate fight. Remember to keep
your goals in mind at all times. You are coming to college for a degree, not drama. Celebrate when you get a great grade, but stay on track, and prepare for any sharp turns or steep declines. I can guarantee that you will have a great time at college, but remember that you are here for a reason. ☺
Water Privatization Argument Essay
Sean Bianchini

English 102, Spring 2008

Abstract

This research paper was written to inform people of water privatization. The essay details four main points involved with the water privatization debate. First, it recognizes the problem with the distribution of water throughout the world. The author then acknowledges the pros and cons of privatized water, detailing previous events and supporting the claim that privatization brings water to the poor. The essay transitions to the opposing argument which assumes that since water is a human right, it should stay in control of local governments. This point is supported by the claim that water would become too expensive for the average person if privatized. Finally, the author suggests that a private/public partnership is the only solution to the problem and through that arrangement, it may be possible to provide fresh, clean drinking water to the poor.

Water privatization is a globally-debated issue, meaning it has become a major topic at United Nations’
conventions as well as other worldwide proceedings. There are few supporters, mainly large companies and governments looking to fund privatization. On the other hand, various people, such as human rights activists, developing countries’ inhabitants, or even citizens in local communities like Clermont, Ohio are opposed to the idea (Jacobs and Howe, 2005, p. 91). The main issues involved are whether or not water is a human right, as well as who should be paying the bills to get clean and safe water to the entire world. The argument that water is a human right is mentioned throughout many researched articles and is an issue that only the United Nations can resolve. Some like Fredrik Segerfeldt (2005/2007) argue that there is no shortage of water, but only poor distribution of it (p. 350). Similarly, Robert Weiner (2007) asserts that 1.1 billion people lack access to safe water (p. 128). However, people like Jeff Fleischer (2007) dispute that water has become scarce and polluted due to industrial development and companies selling water for profit (p. 353). As the latter states, many people show different beliefs, and include conflicting facts on the water issue. A compromise seems needed to help solve the water management and distribution problem, especially in poor countries.

Currently, the privatized water market is led by two French national corporations, Suez and Veolia. These companies have significant influence when international governments meet, as
The amount of money invested is enormous. For example, Veolia bought a water filter corporation for $6 billion (Ortega, 2005/2007, p. 347). These companies are investing hefty amounts of money to keep water clean, which demonstrates how expensive it can be for public companies to provide clean, safe water. Without the help of private companies, can local governments provide enough funding to get water to entire communities? That is a question yet to be answered. The truth is privatization has succeeded in some parts of the world. Ronald Bailey (2005) claims that even imperfect privatization efforts have successfully connected people to inexpensive water. In the African nation of Guinea, only 20 percent of the urban community had access to safe drinking water before 1989; by 2001, 70 percent did, Bailey asserts. However, privatization has failed more than it has been successful, and local communities make up a great deal of the opposition to it (Bailey, 2005). Some of the concerns are the possible increase of water prices, the lack of communication from the companies to the public, and the local government’s loss of control over a vital public service. Jeffrey Jacobs and Charles Howe (2005) emphasize the tendency of communities to protest against local public officials rather than the private companies when contracts fail to meet the citizen’s expectations (p. 91). Such protests leave local governments in a dilemma when choosing between honoring
a contract with private contractors or reacting to arguments from the community. There have been many failed attempts throughout the world including here in America. For example, Jacobs and Howe (2005) review an occurrence in Indiana where the local government repossessed control of water resources when a private company failed to reach the expectations of the community. Similarly, the Council of Canadians (2007) points to a particular event in 2004 where Uruguay voted on the human right to water. By almost a majority, the people voted to ensure public access to clean safe water which means no control by for-profit companies (p. 369). These are just a few of many examples of the failures and successes of water privatization.

Although there is little support throughout the world for water privatization, research suggests that if properly run, private companies can get clean affordable water to the poor. The major problem described in many of the articles is the terrible distribution of water. Segerfeldt (2005/2007) argues that there is no shortage of water, but only poor distribution of it (p. 350). Everyone seems to agree that water is essential to all life on the planet. Weiner (2007) points out that water is obtainable from rivers and lakes, but it is unevenly distributed throughout the world (p. 128). This reality of water as a resource may cause the uneducated to believe water is becoming scarce, hence causing them to oppose
privatization. A secondary argument for privatization though is that public companies may not be able to handle full control of water resources, especially as the world’s population grows exponentially. As Jacobs and Howe (2005) point out, small public companies have limited resources and money to provide training or access to first-class facilities (p. 97). In this case, privatization could supply the money, human resources, and technical expertise to fix whatever problems that might occur in these communities.

The sheer amount of money needed to provide access of safe water to the poor is enormous. Bailey (2005) claims that $110 to $180 billion in investments are lacking to fund water projects throughout the world (p. 1). This seems insurmountable for the public sector to handle. This dollar figure only points out what is lacking right now. Brewster (2005) predicts that an additional $14-$30 billion each year needs to be invested if water is to be properly distributed worldwide (p. 92). The facts do not lie, and it is hard to believe that local governments would be able to supply the money needed without raising taxes considerably. Colin Robinson (2004) suggests we treat water like other privatized utilities, including electricity and gas. This option gives the public an opportunity to choose who controls their water, therefore reducing prices rather than increasing them. Other authors also argue that privatizing water resources will not
necessarily increase prices. Segerfeldt (2005/2007) claims that prices may increase slightly for those who already pay for their water, as some do in France (p. 351). The prices may increase because it is expensive to lay new pipes and create new networks in poor countries. On the other hand, inhabitants of under-developed countries already pay for poor quality water, so privatization at least will make clean water more accessible and affordable. According to Segerfeldt (2005/2007), even doubling the price of water could actually give poor people access to cheaper water than before (p. 351). The typical assumption about water privatization by the anti-privatization movement is that water is a human right, as opposed to a commodity. Segerfeldt (2005/2007) attempts to put this view to rest when stating that food is our human right, but no one fights for that to become a law (p. 351). As Segerfeldt claims, no one can argue that all food should be distributed by governments, so the same should be said for water. Although there are major reasons to privatize water resources, the majority of the world fights to keep water under control of local governments.

As water is essential to human survival, people take this problem very seriously. Those opposed to privatization believe that a law affirming water as a human right is essential. Such proposed legislation leaves control of water by local governments,
thus allowing the public to vote or to have a say in what is done with their water. The Council of Canadians (2007), led by Maud Barlow, believes privatization leads to rising water rates, unclean water, and increased profits for large corporations (p. 368). The only way to ensure that private companies do not take control of water, the Council advocates, is to enshrine the human right to water. Weiner (2007) argues that profit from water is immoral, and that the private sector should not be able to gain control over a liquid which is considered the essence of life (p. 131). It makes sense then for those opposing privatization to support water becoming a human right. A secondary argument is if water were privatized, the public will have no access to water quality and information. When tap water is a public resource, explains Ortega (2005/2007), the community has access to records and documentation. However, like bottled water, privatization would remove that availability of information (p. 346). Ortega’s views contradict others, for he shows through an example how when France privatized its water, costs to the consumer increased considerably (p. 347). Those supporting privatization view the opposite, which leaves questions about what and whom to believe. Some claim that the current wars have oil access as a major underlying force, as made explicit by Ortega (2005/2007, p. 349). A war over water has the potential to be much worse. While oil is
privatized, it is not essential for life, and definitely, it is not perceived as a human right. However, water is a necessity, and if there were ever a shortage, it would become available only to the highest bidders. This could cause a public outcry and the possibility of a war. Both sides of the argument have valid points. However, with so much separation between the two sides, a partnership of some sort needs to be negotiated.

The world can be very ignorant at times with this situation as a great example. Neither side seems willing to give in at all to the other. A possible solution may be a public/private partnership where both sides work together rather than against each other. Too much effort is being spent on worrying about what the other group is doing, and the world is forgetting that one billion people lack access to clean safe water. Jacobs and Howe (2005) suggest one possible solution where private companies run the larger cities’ water utilities, yet public control continues in the smaller communities (p. 96). This will help put pressure on the public-run companies to improve quality overall because there will be private companies in place willing to take over when needed. Running smaller markets would also reduce the amount of funding that local governments would need. If the government could find a way to have more private companies involved, people would be able to choose a supplier from whom to get their water, and hence
put pressure on these companies to improve water quality and to reduce prices. Even supporters of privatization recognize the need for partnership. Segerfeldt (2005/2007), for example, believes there needs to be a discussion on how to make the existing companies work better, instead of rejecting them altogether (p. 352). Human rights activists seem to reject any sort of idea and would rather leave it the way it is. Since water access and distribution are not working well with the current systems, something has to be done. As stated before, there are mainly two companies that run water’s private sector, Suez and Veolia. For a partnership to work, there has to be more companies involved. The price of oil is bad enough. Could one imagine what it would be like if Shell and Chevron were the only two competitors? In the case for water, the more companies involved, the better. This would allow for better discussion, larger conferences, and more ideas from everyone alike. As Raul Rodriguez (2004) acknowledges, a greater focus on the financing challenges and a lesser obsession with asset ownership will allow for stronger partnerships (p. 112). Greater input from either side allows demands to be met while using fewer resources and promoting better use of an existing infrastructure. This in turn saves money, time, and lives. Another possible addition to this solution is the idea of having shareholders. Having shares in a company gives the
public some control over the money being spent while leaving the corporation to deal with distribution. If the public is dissatisfied with the company, they are free to sell their shares, thus depleting the corporation of funds.

Although many people recognize the problems with water distribution, little progress has been made to fix them. Instead, communities and private companies are in a head-on battle where neither side is going to budge. Support for privatization comes from the belief that getting clean, safe water to the poor is extremely expensive, yet private corporations are willing to provide whatever funds are needed. Greater competition between water companies seems needed to put pressure on each other to deliver the best services and product. On the other hand, the argument for water to become a human right is a strong one about which people feel very passionate. They believe water may become a commodity for which prices will skyrocket. Some are concerned they will have no access to water quality records, and they are worried about possible diseases. The solution that several people have suggested is a private/public partnership where both the company and the community have some control. This partnership, I believe, leaves room for mistakes or improvements on either side, and hopefully an end to the lack of water availability, especially in under-developed countries. Activists
around the world are very passionate about the human rights issue. However, Bailey (2005) states that “more than a billion poor people in the world today lack access to safe drinking water” (p.1). These needs, I argue, cannot be ignored.
References


(Original interview appeared January 14, 2005 on www.motherjones.com)


(Original work appeared March 20, 2005 in *Seattle Times*)


Hepatitis B virus affects many people’s lives all around the world. It causes many deaths and serious illnesses. If people learn enough about the disease and the problem that it is causing, the world could fight the epidemic and suppress the disease. There needs to be more methods developed to stop the spread of hepatitis B. People need to learn about the prevention techniques, the treatments for the disease, and how to protect themselves from acquiring the disease. There are many different choices that can be made to prevent this disease from taking many more lives. The idea of a registry needs to be spread around the world with San Francisco’s system as a great example of how the world needs to work together to fight the spread of hepatitis B.
The hepatitis B virus is a serious problem all over the world. There are between 350 - 450 million people affected by hepatitis B globally. There need to be ways established to prevent, control, and terminate this virus. Hepatitis B is transmitted through body fluids and is one hundred times more infectious than HIV (Lin & Kirchner, 2004, p. 69). There are about 400 million people who are infected with chronic hepatitis B virus (Han, 2006, p. 1832). The CDC (2007) states that, “a confirmed case of chronic HBV infection is defined as an infection in a person who tests HBsAg positive, HBV DNA positive, or HBeAg positive two times at least 6 months apart” (p. 446). HBsAg, HBV DNA, and HBeAg are the different tests that a person can take to figure out whether he or she does have hepatitis B.

Hsu (1997) writes that there has been a vaccination available for 15 years and the world has known that hepatitis B is a serious problem (p. C8). If people were to be vaccinated, this epidemic could possibly come to an end soon. The vaccination is
the best way to protect the health of a person. It does not even allow the infection to be possible in the body. Although the vaccination has been available, hepatitis B virus has continued to spread to more humans in the United States (New York Times, 1988, p. B7). This problem is a result of the stubbornness of society and the lack of mass media coverage of the disease and the problems that it can cause. Hsu believes that, “In the long-term, universal infant vaccinations would eliminate the need to immunize adolescents and adults” (p. C8). This would also eliminate the need for drugs to fight off the effects which the virus has on the human body.

Some argue against the universal infant vaccination. Unless the needle already has been used, this vaccination shot is completely safe. People do not need to worry about its affecting any other part of the person. Some people might argue that vaccinating all infants would not work because of the people who are born at home or somewhere other than a hospital. The charge
for the sequence of shots from a private doctor could be up to one hundred dollars (Hsu, 1997, p. C8). In the past, many people might have been afraid to get the vaccination because people might place them in the groups that are most susceptible to acquiring the disease. Others would argue that the people with the disease already would still be spreading the disease to people who have not gotten the vaccination. Hsu suggests that people who are not vaccinated as children should get it and protect themselves from this terrible problem.

A major topic of concern for people who are infected with hepatitis B virus is which treatment to use. One problem with choosing the correct medicine is that there are different types of hepatitis B. The different types can be found in different parts of the world. In all forms of the disease, there are the same destructive outcomes if untreated. Han (2006) believes that, “The ultimate goal of antiviral therapy in chronic HBV infection is to prevent progression to cirrhosis and development of HCC” (p.
This is the goal of every medication that is taken by patients who already have the disease. Cirrhosis is the failure of the liver, which leads to death unless there is a liver transplant.

The first treatments were those using interferon. In 1976, doctors were using this treatment uncertain if it would work for everyone, but they were very hopeful that it would, and that treatments for other diseases and illness could be found through this protein (New York Times, 1976, p. 23). This drug is still being used today for some people with the disease. Kelly (2006) states, “Interferon is a naturally occurring protein, which enhances the immune response… increasing natural killer cell activity” (p. 355). This protein stimulates the components in the body that fight off foreign substances. Another treatment that has shown effectiveness in suppressing the effects of hepatitis B is Chinese herbal medicine. McCulloch et al. (2002) believe that this medication is chosen over many others because of its low cost and low toxicity (p. 1619). Many people who can afford it take both
the interferon and the Chinese herbal medicine. McCulloch et al. (2002) explain Chinese herbal medicine’s use: “Chinese herbal medicine is used as a treatment adjunct or alternative to interferon alfa and accounts for 30% to 50% of total medicine consumption” (p. 1619). This medicine is used all over the world for the relief from chronic hepatitis B effects.

A third treatment that could be helpful is Lamivudine. This drug prevents the replication of hepatitis B (Kelly, 2006, p. 355). It was first used to treat human immunodeficiency virus, but in 1999, it was approved by the FDA to be used to treat hepatitis B virus (Lin & Kirchner, 2004, p. 86). The limitations to this drug are that it causes relapses once the person stops taking the drug (Kelly, 2006, p. 355). Lin and Kirchner state that Lamivudine can be better than interferon because it can be taken orally, there is a high degree of tolerability, and there is greater safety for people who have already developed cirrhosis of the liver (p. 86). There are many different types of treatments, but people just need to
search for the right one for them. There are also certain treatments specifically for children or even older people.

There can be many complaints for these treatments. People could feel that none of these would work well or have not undergone the proper testing, but each of these treatments has been well tested, the best available treatments at this time. Another concern could come from someone who was prescribed a treatment that is not as well tested as these others. The doctor prescribes the best medical treatment for each patient with hepatitis B. There are many drugs that have proven to work, and sometimes doctors like having their patients use other treatments because they have found success in the past. Each of these treatments, if accepted by the FDA, is going to work to some capacity. If one does not work, then people should try another for better results.

Protection is another major concern for people when it comes to dealing with hepatitis B virus. The CDC (2007) documents the number of people who are reported to have hepatitis
B: “Worldwide, 370 million persons have chronic HBV infection, and 500,000 — 700,000 persons die annually from HBV-related liver disease…” (p. 441). There are different ways that healthcare providers are working to make everyone safer. A registry system is helping healthcare providers in the San Francisco area to keep track of and be aware of all people who have tested positive for hepatitis B virus. Some techniques are mentioned to help make the registry work more efficiently.

The CDC (2007) presents many powerful arguments and ideas to better help the reader understand the terrible problem that hepatitis B has been causing and will continue to cause. Most of Asia, Africa, and the Middle East are affected by hepatitis B as a prevalent disease. The CDC believes that around 45% of the world’s population lives where chronic hepatitis B is a prevalent disease (p. 446). Many people in San Francisco, California were born in Asia or are descendants of people born there. According to the CDC, the most regularly noted risk of infection is being born in
a disease-stricken country (p. 447). The CDC states, “fewer than one third of persons with chronic HBV infection in San Francisco in 2006 had been referred to a specialist for evaluation or undergone treatment…” (p. 447). A person who is infected should go to a specialist for the best help and care. Cases of hepatitis B must be reported as soon as detected by health-care providers or those in other specific jobs. People who are in close contact with infected people should be vaccinated as soon as possible. The CDC believes that hepatitis B registries will help health departments better organize themselves, so that healthcare providers will be better protected when they treat a patient who already has tested positive for hepatitis B.

There are also universal healthcare procedures that healthcare providers have to take that protect them. The CDC (2007) explains how healthcare providers are required to report cases of acute and chronic hepatitis B, as follows: “Reporting requirements for both laboratories and providers include supplying
the name, age, sex, and contact information of persons with
positive tests…” (p. 446). This is important because these are the
people trying to help end the spread of the disease. If the
healthcare professionals are most susceptible to the disease and are
not protected, how are they going to protect others? There is a
registry being made with of all the people who have tested positive
for hepatitis B, but the problem that is found is that it is only
happening in San Francisco. This registry system needs to be
universal to protect healthcare providers globally.

The CDC (2007) uses many important facts and data to
support the suggested ideas. The CDC states that there are
approximately 25,700 people who have been registered into the
San Francisco database for healthcare providers (p. 446). The
CDC reports that the registry “received reports of 2,238 persons
with test results consistent with probable chronic HBV infection;
all were reported by laboratories” (p. 446). This is evidence that
the tests are being administered and reported. People in the
medical field and others are becoming more aware of the problem. These people are able to protect and prepare themselves much better. The CDC’s argument was weakened by only having a small regional area of people who can relate to the information that is offered. There needs to be implementation of this reporting procedure in more than one place, and not just in our country.

People could argue against this registry because it may be perceived as representing a breach of personal privacy. This could take away the right a patient has to health information being confidential. If such health information about infectious diseases is kept confidential, this could destroy this whole procedure for keeping healthcare providers safe because people would not have to tell anyone that they have the disease. Healthcare workers would be at greater risk. The San Francisco Department of Public Health is in charge of the confidentiality of the patients who are in the registry (CDC, 2007, p. 446). The registry system would help
everyone, but many oppose it, and prevent it from being
implemented universally.

Hepatitis B virus is a serious problem all over the
world. People should come together and fight this problem so that
the spread of the disease can be controlled. People need to become
knowledgeable about the different treatments, preventions, and
protocols, especially the registry system, that could save many
lives globally.
References


Water: A Worlly Concern

Andrew Pickul

English 102, Spring 2008

Abstract

The subject of water has become a global concern.

Without clean drinking water, people around the world would have a hard time finding ways to live. Drinking water in many areas contains thousands of pollutants that are not being properly treated, leading to people globally getting sick daily. Ideas for an upgrade in the water systems worldwide are examined, including in the Middle East and the United States. Ideas of privatization are analyzed with positive and negative outcomes examined.

Drinking water is a serious issue for many of the countries around the world, including the United States. I believe several water-related changes are needed, mainly the construction of good water
People around the world drink water daily, but others do not have the same opportunity and would do anything for a single sip of fresh water. What if when you drank your glass of water, you found all sorts of filth and fungi in your cup? Unfortunately, that is the case in some of the countries around the world today. Fresh drinking water is vital for human beings to live, and without it, we as a human race will cease to exist. We, as a community of one, need to take more seriously the issue of fresh drinking water around the world. We need to create better fresh water systems for people in poorer countries. In the United States, water that runs to our homes, businesses, and public places needs to be better protected, too, from chemicals and toxins that get hundreds sick every day, some without even realizing it. Finally, we need to oppose water privatization that makes millions of
dollars for private companies and governments while driving the
costs of fresh drinking water, water that is supposed to be free, to
unaffordable prices. People around the world need to do their part
to help revitalize the ideas on water, create local workarounds, and
make a difference for future generations.

The fresh water systems that allow for water to flow to
homes and businesses in foreign countries, including India,
Pakistan, and Iraq are old, outdated, or poorly run, leading to
illness very quickly. People who rely on these systems to provide
fresh water for drinking, cooking, and irrigating now have to be
fearful of the chemicals and toxins that may pollute the water
because of these outdated water systems. Ayers (2005/2007)
explains the cost of water-related illnesses in India: “India, for
example, lost 73 million working days because of water illnesses,
 costing the economy over 600 million dollars” (p. 361). To show
the extent of this global problem, Ayers adds how “internationally,
in human costs, a child dies every 8-10 seconds of a water-born
illness” (p. 361). A study conducted over six months by the Central Pollution Control Board is reported to show that levels of the toxic substances known as trihalomethanes (TTHM) in New Delhi’s water supply are at four to five times higher than that of World Health standards for acceptability (Loudon, 2006, p. 12). Loudon explains that high levels of TTHM can cause cancer as well as miscarriages for pregnant women who drink such contaminated water daily (p. 10). These examples of people dying because of bad water should engage government officials to identify solutions to these problems before they further escalate.

Governments insist that they follow standard procedures regularly to maintain clean drinking water for the citizens of their countries or states. According to Erica Weir (2005), it is generally recommended that the water systems be tested for bacteria three times each year, and for metals once every two months (p. 1438). However, if these people are continuing to get sick, is the government really doing its job? They say they are
doing what needs to be done to meet basic standards. However, this is not good enough. Ayers and Loudon agree with the argument for better water systems in foreign countries and stress that there needs to be improvement in this area, yet some places face serious issues with water pollution in the near future. The water problems still exist while the government collects its water bills, money that should be used to build new water systems for those who need it. Merely maintaining the water systems in Iraq and India, for example, may cost upwards of 270 billion dollars over the next 20 years (Morris, 2007, p. 25).

Treatment plants need to be upgraded so the filtering systems will pump clean water, and not water contaminated by different toxins and pollutants that are not being picked up by some of the outdated systems. For some of these systems to be replaced, governments need to take a stand on what to do and how to do it, and quickly, just as the city of Santa Barbara, California where citizens are informed about water consumption and
management. Not all communities, however, are like Santa Barbara with its highly environmentally-aware, informed, proactive, and wealthy citizenry.

You would think that while living in the United States, a citizen’s drinking water would be free of water contaminants, right? Think again, for the drinking water that flows from the faucets and ground wells for many American residences, even in Philadelphia, is being contaminated with few people realizing it. The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) (2008) reports that many cities around the country rely on pre-World War I-era water delivery systems and treatment technology (NRDC.org, 2008). Aging pipes can break, leak contaminants into the water, and cause illness to the people who drink it. According to the NRDC (2008), U.S. tap water contains levels of lead, trihalomethanes, halo acetic acids, arsenic, radon, and other toxic chemicals that cannot be seen or smelled (NRGC.org, 2008). They also found levels of arsenic in the water systems in major U.S.
cities for 22 million Americans. Treatment plants and fresh water systems are not up-to-date in all places and lead to people becoming ill. Sewage runoffs from industrial factories and hazardous materials are dumped into lakes, rivers, and streams which end up passing through faucets, as the filtration systems are not working at a proper level to pick up the newest of carcinogens and bacteria. According to the NRDC, water that is supposed to be clean that we can use to drink and cook is in fact waste water, incorrectly purified and cleaned (NRDC.org, 2008).

The NRDC (2008) explains that water supplies in Baltimore, Fresno, Los Angeles, New Orleans, and San Diego are vulnerable to agricultural pollution containing nitrogen, pesticides, and sediment. Not only is water unclean, but also, it is unprotected, and in some areas, wasted. Water pipes, often more than 100 years old, leak millions of gallons of water each day in every major city in the United States (Morris, 2007, p. 1). To provide a better example, Hurricane Katrina ravaged New Orleans...
and its water system. Because of that damage, water pipes in New Orleans leak nearly 50 million gallons of water each day.

Recent actions made by the Bush administration are making the water problems in the U.S. even worse. According to Robert Morris (2007), the government sees corporate polluters as making matters worse for the public water systems, yet the government is not enforcing the current pollution laws (p. 25). The government should be doing all it can to ensure that citizens get clean, safe drinking water every time they turn on a faucet or stop at a public water fountain (Lambert, 2006, p. 1). Some changes that could be made could be done at affordable prices, including replacing drinking water filtration systems, fixing water pipes, and advancing the technology used in treatment plants. All of these ideas the government can use to give Americans access to fresh, clean drinking water when they want it.

Morris and Lambert agree that water in the U.S. is unsafe, and that the government is not doing everything it can to
assure the American people that their drinking water is clean.

According to Eleanor Sterling in Blue Planet Blues (2007), conserving water is also an idea that has come to mind by many of the government officials. It is something simple that Americans can do to preserve their water, according to Sterling. Wastewater is costly to treat; however, if people could cut down on their water usage, it would be less that would have to travel through filtration and treatment plants. Bounties of choices are available to Americans once we decide to stop taking our fresh water for granted, and government leaders agree on how cities’ water systems can improve.

Water Privatization has played a large role in how fresh water is delivered to those who live in poor conditions. Worldwide, 1.1 billion people, mainly those who live in ill conditions, do not have access to clean, safe water (Segerfeldt, 2005/2007, pp. 350-352). Privatization was sought as a solution to help aid those less fortunate people get the basic necessity that
every human being needs to survive. Segerfeldt (2005/2007) reports that 97% of all water in poor countries is managed by the public sector, which leaves the government in charge of most of the operations (pp. 350-352). Some people are outraged about the ideas that corporate owners want to take over the water operations in poor countries to make a personal profit for themselves.

The privatization, if in place, would drive up the cost of drinking water to unaffordable prices for those people in poorer countries who need it most. Segerfeldt, however, stresses in his article that privatization is a good way to implement a system for some of the poorer countries of the world (p. 351). I have to argue against privatization in this situation. The drinking water and its system should be left to the local governments, for they know the people and what they want. If water privatization were to take over, people, who cannot afford to pay exorbitant amounts of money for drinking water, would be forced to pay, or live without it. If private companies come in, governments risk losing the
people’s trust, which could hurt them in the long run. Water companies say they want to help, but they are only in it to make a profit, not caring about the people they may end up hurting by jacking up the price of drinking water, which is scarce as it is.

We need to find ways to keep government in control of the water systems that operate around the world, mostly in some of the poorer countries located in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. If not, people could be looking at paying an extremely high amount for daily drinking water. Something we call a necessity to live could soon turn into something we no longer can afford if privatization takes over globally.

Fresh drinking water is vital for all human beings to live. We, as a community of one, need to take more seriously the issue of fresh drinking water around the world. We need to find ways to create better fresh water systems for people in poorer countries, mainly located in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. Because thousands are getting ill each day due to the poor water
conditions, solutions to these problems need to be found quickly.

Here in the United States, water that runs to our homes, businesses, and public places needs to be better protected from chemicals and toxins that get hundreds sick every day, some without even realizing it. We need to figure out ways to keep these germs and toxins out of our drinking water. Finally, privatization needs to disappear before corporations come in making millions of dollars for themselves and governments while driving the costs of fresh drinking water, water that is supposed to be free to all, to unaffordable prices. We need to figure out ways to make drinking water a main priority throughout the world. When we do figure out a way, we as one community will be unified through our efforts to supply this natural resource as a clean, affordable drinking water to all. Let the battle continue.
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Comparative Review of Three Sources on Human Trafficking

Megan Farrell

English 102, Spring 2006

Human trafficking has become a worldwide epidemic. It started as an Asian problem, but as the economy underwent drastic changes, human trafficking spread globally. Victims are usually misled into thinking they are going to have jobs waiting for them in a new country. However, they are forced to work as labor and sex slaves. Alexandra V. Orlova (2004) in “From Social Dislocation to Human Trafficking: The Russian Case” describes how human trafficking is affecting Russia. The United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (2006) in Terrorism, Corruption & Human Trafficking explains the use of victims as bonded labor, and how they are manipulated into thinking they are going to have jobs and a place to live in the destination country. The Salvation Army (2006) in What is Human Trafficking? describes the potential health and physical risks that the victims of human trafficking undergo.

Orlova (2004) explains how Russia has become well known for human trafficking. She tells how for South and
Southeastern Asia, human trafficking has been an endemic for decades. It recently increased though due to the change in the world’s economy. Orlova explains in great detail the topics of “Root Causes of Human Trafficking, Recruitment and Transportation, Methods of Controlling Victims, Pinning Hopes on Putin,” and “Social Welfare and Economic Policy.” These topics give a sense of reality to human trafficking, explaining what the victims and their families must go through, and showing what the governments around the world are trying to do to put a stop to this global epidemic. Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) are also helping to end human trafficking. Orlova cites the data and information for each topic. Unlike Orlova, the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (2006) overviews how the human-trafficking victims are deceived, describing what is happening now, rather than explaining the history of this social injustice and crime.

The United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (2006) provides the facts of human trafficking, states what happens if the victim consents, and distinguishes between human trafficking and the smuggling of persons. In the document, *Terrorism, Corruption, and Human Trafficking*, it is explained how human trafficking has “reached epidemic proportions,” meaning that it has spread quickly throughout the world. It is a multi-billion dollar
business that consists of shuffling human beings from one country or city to another to work in deplorable environments. The victims are known to their traffickers as “bonded labor,” which means they have a debt they must pay off before they are set free (p. 2). The victims initially consent because they are often “misled or deceived” by those who have or are going to traffic them. Often the consent is invalid because those who gave the “okay” were children under the age of 18 (p. 1). Although the article is up-to-date, the information is imprecise about what the victims must go through. Instead of giving a brief overview of human trafficking like that by The United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (2006), The Salvation Army (2006) explains each aspect of human trafficking thoroughly and lists the potential effects the victims suffer.

The Salvation Army (2006) clarifies human trafficking by explaining the meaning of several critical terms related to this problem: “sex trafficking, commercial sex act, coercion, involuntary servitude, debt bondage, and peonage” (p. 2). These topics are used throughout the article, explaining what traffickers do and say to the victims to keep them under their control. They use fear, violence, and threats to keep those trafficked afraid to stand up for themselves, or fearful to get help somewhere. The Salvation Army describes the different forms of trafficking, and
what the men, women, and children are forced to do. The article includes several charts that list the “Forms of risk and abuse” and the “Potential health conditions” these victims must face. Not only do the victims have to face physical and mental health problems, their basic human rights are violated. The Salvation Army describes, in great detail, the potential health, physical, and mental problems suffered by the victims. Each effect of human trafficking is described clearly, allowing readers to better understand the social injustices that the victims experience.

The Salvation Army (2006) may not be the longest article, but it has the most useful information. It shows what victims go through, thus allowing readers to better understand human trafficking, to better recognize social injustices that the victims experience, and to work toward resolving the deplorable situation. Even though the article thoroughly describes human trafficking, it does so only in the sense of listing the potential consequences instead of analyzing each. Orlova (2004) does describe how human trafficking originated in Russia, but instead of showing what the government is doing to solve the problem, she is more focused on the history and negativity of human trafficking. Finally, the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (2006) describes facts of present-day human trafficking as well as what governmental agencies and NGOs are doing to end this crime.
against humanity. Although the details are up-to-date informative, the article lacks an analysis of the issue. Each source, in its own way, will help readers to better understand human trafficking, and to realize that something needs to be done to end such a social injustice. Even though each of the three sources is informative, I realize how I need to further research facts and investigate issues related to the physical and psychological effects of human trafficking on its victims.

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AMANDA SITA’S PORTFOLIO FROM ENGLISH 102:

TEXTS ARE FULLY REVISED
Amanda Sita

English 102 Portfolio

Neumann College

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Amanda Sita

Neumann College
After completing English 102, I feel that my writing has improved significantly. There were many new concepts that I learned about how to conduct research and properly prepare a research paper. Throughout this process, I acquired new writing and critical thinking skills, greater research and information literacy, more efficient means of revising a paper, and more knowledge about a topic that I knew very little about at the start of the semester. This class made writing very enjoyable for me because I was learning about something that interested me, as well as attaining new writing skills and knowledge that I can use for the rest of my life.

After completing the first essay, the Comparative Analysis, my writing and critical thinking skills have improved greatly. In the first draft, the verb tense did not agree in many areas of the paper and the transitions from each paragraph were not reader-friendly. It took some time to figure out how to make these transitions easier for readers to understand; however, I learned from my mistakes, and the final draft of the essay resulted in my having no errors, and it was easy to read. In addition, I also learned how to come up with a thesis statement in relation to critical thinking about evidence, statistics, examples and other information provided in the three sources. In the Critical Review, I learned how to create a thesis about my opinion on biotechnology,
and support my beliefs with evidence and examples from the article. In the Argument Essay, I learned that it is important to include opposing views because it helps to make the argument more developed and convincing to the reader. This is important because it shows that not everyone has the same ideas about the topic. Analyzing and evaluating the sources were key parts to the research process. In the comparative essay, I was able to have the chance to compare the strengths and limitations of articles about a similar topic, and find out which sources would be more useful than others in my argument for biotechnology to feed the hungry.

Learning how to provide developed and well-supported claims with credible sources in a research paper took time with active reading, planning, and revising. Using good grammar and writing clear sentences also took time. These are critical components for writing a good research paper.

In addition to acquiring new writing and critical thinking skills, information literacy skills were also acquired. Before entering English 102, I always had trouble locating sources for papers. However, after the class was brought to the library, I learned how to use the school’s academic databases to locate articles from many different newspapers, magazines, journals, and books. Finding sources about my topic was much easier because the databases allowed me to narrow searches by using key search
terms to find exactly what I wanted. After being introduced to this system, I have used it for many other papers in other classes. When all of the sources that I needed were obtained, I learned how to evaluate whether sources were credible by seeing if they were reviewed by scholars, or if they were just opinion pieces printed in magazines or newspapers. The research process as a whole was very interesting to learn because I never knew that there were ways to make the process easier. By comparing similar sources in essays and writing summaries of each source in the form of annotated references, the research writing process is much easier to complete. The one weakness that I encountered during my writing was that I did not take very good notes initially on many of my sources. I found that I wasted much time by reexamining articles when I could have saved myself time in the beginning by writing important facts and ideas in my notes. The research process is very time consuming; however, after learning how to take notes more precisely, I feel that I will be able to use this process to write research papers more effectively in the future.

Not only did this class teach me good research skills, it also introduced me to a new way of revising papers and engaging in peer review. By using the online system, MyCompLab, our class was able to analyze one another’s papers more closely by allowing comments to be made in a special virtual space that was
easily accessed. This system was very useful because it not only helped me to learn how to give better feedback to other students, it also allowed me to receive feedback that was more in depth than traditional face-to-face styles of peer review in class. The system made it easier to focus on all of the aspects of the paper, such as mechanics and concepts. I found that I learned more this way because I could learn from the weaknesses and strengths of other students and incorporate the new knowledge into my writing. The paperless system should definitely be adopted by the rest of the school because it makes a student’s writing and revising processes more efficient.

The final part of this course that I liked was that I was able to learn about a topic that interested me. I never realized how serious hunger is around the world, and how many people go to sleep hungry each night. The whole idea of genetically-modified foods was completely new to me, even though they have been around for many years. I found it to be very interesting how a single seed can enhance the nutrition of the poor people in underdeveloped countries as well as produce greater crop yields for farmers because the seeds are resistant to harsh weather and soil conditions. Learning about this topic made me very upset about how many people are starving in the world. I now want to make a difference by somehow helping to stop world hunger. The idea of
genetically-modified crops sounds good; however, for greater support of biotechnology, people need to be persuaded that these crops are safe to consume and that the process is environmentally safe.

After being in English 102, I now feel more confident as a writer. Over the course of the semester, I have learned how to improve my writing and critical thinking skills, my research and information literacy skills, I have been introduced to a paperless system of peer review and revision, and most interestingly, I have learned about a topic that interests me. I have learned so much information about research and writing, and have already used processes for other research papers in other classes this semester. I have always enjoyed writing, and this class has reinforced that response. What I have learned this semester will stay with me, not only for the rest of my college years, but for the rest of my life.
Feeding the Population Annotated References

Amanda Sita

Neumann College


John Allen (2003) notes in his article the conflict between genetically-modified foods and the Catholic Church. The issue has been under debate for a while, and the Church has not reached a conclusion on the position that it takes. Some bishops argue that it is harmful to the environment and human health as well as a negligent act; however, other bishops and the Holy See view it as perfectly fine because the population is growing and genetically-modified foods are a way to feed the hungry. It is thought that the Church will allow for this new technology to be approached with vigilance. I think that this article will be helpful when I
am discussing opposing views toward genetically-modified foods.


Laurent Belsie (2000) states that biotechnology is going to be very useful in regards to creating more abundant crop yields for farmers and more nutritious food for the poor. He claims that by adding pesticides to the plants, this can be achieved. Corn is the main crop being genetically-modified and Belsie notes that some restaurants are using this corn in their products. However, he concludes that some believe that this is dangerous to the population because it can cause allergic reactions in people as well as other problems that have not yet been discovered by the universities doing the research. This source could be useful to me because it discusses how genetically-
modified foods could be used to help farmers as well as the effects that they may have on consumers.


Gerald Coleman (2005) observes that genetically-modified foods are being seen by the Catholic Church as a possibility to stop world hunger and malnutrition. These crops are already a major part of the food products that are being consumed today and have been eaten by people all over the world for years. He adds that there has been no trace of illnesses anywhere as a result of GMOs. Coleman outlines the different views that people in the Catholic Church have towards genetically-modified organisms. They range from being in favor of genetically-modified organisms to being completely against them because they cause farmers to be dependent on large corporations, which
may cause other harm to people as well. He concludes that the Church just wants to do what is best for all people in the world. This source could be useful when I discuss the section in my paper about the Catholic Church’s view on genetically-modified foods, and why the Church is not completely opposed.


Philippe Demenent (2001) notes that scientists are constantly trying to create genetically-modified foods that can stop world hunger. He points out that there is already genetically-modified rice called Nerica that is used in Africa to resist the pesticides and to survive the harsh soil conditions. It is also supplemented with beta carotene in order to make up for the lack of vitamin A in their poor diets that lead to diseases and malnutrition. He concludes that scientists hope to create more crops like this rice so that farming can be enhanced and more successful to produce.
enough nutritious foods to feed the world. This article will benefit my research paper because I can use it when explaining the intended uses of genetically-modified crops.


This article emphasizes that genetically-modified foods will do no good to people or the world. It states that they will only cause more starvation in the world, increase safety risks in foods, and be detrimental to the earth. It is accentuated that food production is not the cause of hunger; it is how the food is distributed around the world. This article claims that food should be made for affordable costs to solve the hunger problem and not be tampered with to create crops that will only cost more to produce and will make matters worse. I can use this source in my paper to discuss the negative effects of genetically-modified foods as well as the main causes of starvation in the world.
Jordan, C. (2002, June). Genetic engineering, the farm crisis, and


Carl Jordan (2002) asserts that genetic engineering will cause problems for farmers as well as the environment. He claims that hunger is not caused by the lack of food supply, but by poverty in countries. The use of genetic engineering will result in overproduction for farmers because the crops will be resistant to pests and diseases. This will lead to an oversupply of crops that will result in a decline in income for farmers. The herbicides and pesticides will also kill different species of insects. Jordan offers a variety of alternatives to farmers so they can lead more efficient work lives in the fields and produce good crops without having to use genetically-modified crops. This article will be useful to me when I explain the negative effects that genetically-modified crops will have on farmers and the environment.

Antonia Juhasz (2003) acknowledges in her article the Bush Administration’s attempt in Sacramento to push for genetically-modified foods. The administration wants to use this technology to solve world hunger; however, the people of Sacramento argue that there is plenty of food produced in the world today, but it is not distributed equally at a fair cost. Juhasz notes that those who are starving the most are the people in the countries that supply the food. Juhasz concludes that because those countries are so poor, the people can not afford to buy food. This source will help me because it shows the beliefs and opinions that Americans have about genetically-modified foods.

Prakash and Conko (2004) inform readers about how biotechnology will help to increase the amount of crops produced in the world. They illustrate the methods used in order to create genetically-modified crops. Prakash and Conko claim that biotechnology will help to feed the rapidly growing population. The nutritional value of crops can be enhanced by adding specific vitamins to prevent malnutrition, and eventually scientists hope to add vaccines into the food to prevent disease. Prakash and Conko affirm that biotechnology will increase farmer’s production as well as create a safer environment for them in which to work without having to worry about breathing in pesticides. This article will be useful in describing how genetically-modified crops are created as well as how they are thought to benefit farmers.


Peter Rosset (2005) declares that the main cause of hunger in the world is due to poverty and
inequality in the world. He notes the leading causes of these problems in the world and how people are affected. Peasant farmers will suffer the most because they have fewer resources to use, and they can not afford to buy the transgenic seeds as the wealthier farmers can. The peasant farmer’s crops are more likely to be destroyed by the transgenic crops because they do not use insecticide, but rather, they rely on the insects to do their pest control. He concludes that transgenic crops would completely change their ways of farming. This article would help me in my paper when I discuss the negative effects that biotechnology will have on poor farmers who do not farm genetically-modified crops.


David Sandalow (2001) observes in his article that biotechnology has positive along with some negative effects. It offers better nutritional value in the foods that are produced. In addition, the crops are meant to help make life easier for farmers because they
are resistant to climate changes and diseases. According to Sandalow, incomes would be increased, and farmers would profit. There are also risks involved because it is a new type of technology and the effects of these gene transfers are still not completely known. Sandalow mentions the various developing methods by groups in the United States to approach biotechnology, and shows all of the research and money being put into this technology. This article will help me to show how much funding and research are being used by the United States for biotechnology and which major groups are participating.


Vandana Shiva (2005/2007) declares in her article that the use of genetically-modified food is wrong. In her eyes, this technology is creating too much food that is being wasted by people, but could be used by animals and insects. Also, due to the addition
of pesticides and herbicides to the plants, the insects and animals that feed off of them are being poisoned by those toxins. Shiva argues that this food is not only being unequally shared with animals, but also among human beings. The poor people do not receive the food that they need to be properly nourished. In order to solve the problem of hunger and poverty, every living thing needs to be treated equally and receive the amount of food that they should have to survive. This article will help me to discuss the negative effects of genetically-modified foods on people as well as the environment, and to discuss how food needs to be distributed more equally among people.
Feeding the Population Comparative Analysis Essay

Amanda Sita

Neumann College
Comparative Analysis Essay on Feeding the Population

Many people globally suffer from starvation and malnutrition. A majority of these people are the poor farmers who grow the crops, but do not have the money to afford to buy food for their families. Scientists are trying to figure out a way to make foods more abundant and available to these people. They are working on creating foods called genetically-modified foods that will provide an abundant yield of crops for farmers along with several other positive aspects. These crops also are enriched with vitamins that are needed to prevent malnourishment in people. This type of technology is thought to be the solution to world hunger. The first article that discusses this issue is “Can Genetically-modified Organisms Feed the World?” by Philippe Demenet (2001). Demenet emphasizes the problem of hunger and how genetically-modified crops could play a major part in solving this problem. He notes many expectations for genetically-modified foods to help poor farmers and to feed poor people. He states that there is already a genetically-modified food which is used to prevent malnutrition. The second article about this topic is “Behind the Biotech Push: World Hunger” by Laurent Belsie (2000) in which the author identifies the positive aspects of genetically-modified crops for farmers and the poor while adding some concerns that consumers have regarding this technology.
The final article analyzed is “Technology That Will Save Billions from Starvation” by C.S. Prakash and Gregory Conko (2004/2007). Prakash and Conko emphasize that to stop world hunger, genetically-modified foods are needed. They state that such an option benefits the farmers as well as the people who consume genetically-modified crops.

In the article “Can Genetically-modified Organisms Feed the World?” Demenet (2001) claims that scientists are doing everything they can to produce genetically-modified crops that will prevent hunger. He also states that some people think that this technology is unnecessary because food needs to be distributed more evenly (p. 10). He notes that there is rice called Nerica that is considered a miracle seed in Africa because it is able to adapt to its harsh climate. According to Demenet, this rice grows very quickly and easily and is resistant to pests (p. 10). In addition, it is supplemented with beta carotene, so that the number of people with vitamin A deficiency can decline. Demenet concludes that scientists hope to perfect this miracle seed and create more crops like it in the future; however, he asserts it has not proven to be completely successful, and that it should not be needed if the food were distributed equally among poor people. The strength of this article is that it focuses on a specific type of genetically-modified food. This is valuable because it gives an example of what can be
done with crops, and how they are intended to help feed the population and provide better nutrition. The article is limited by the author’s questioning of the use of genetically-modified foods. This limitation is important because it shows how people are not completely certain about the effects of genetically-modified foods.

The article “Behind the Biotech Push: World Hunger” shows the opposite of Demenet’s view. Instead of focusing on a single type of genetically-modified food, Belsie (2000) provides information about how genetically-modified crops, in general, are useful to farmers and nutritious to consumers. Belsie claims that biotechnology is being studied more frequently by scientists who declare that this is the way to improve plant breeding (p. 3). Belsie reveals that it can provide many positive uses for farmers because it is able to be injected with pesticides as well as produce more crop yields, and too, that the plants are more resistant to weather (p. 3). He adds that some genetically-modified corn has already been sold to major food industries and has been consumed by people. The worst result of this is allergic reactions by some, but nothing worse has been reported (p. 3). Belsie concludes that even though there may be some minor risk factors that accompany biotechnology, it should definitely be considered for use by poor farmers in under-developed countries to increase their food supply. The strength of this article is that it provides details about several
uses of genetically-modified foods, and identifies a possible risk factor. This is valuable because it notes examples about which poor countries would find such food crops useful, and explains why. This article is limited by the author’s positive view on the topic. This limitation is important because it shows a bias for biotechnology; even though it cannot solve all of the world’s hunger problem, it can definitely play a major part in feeding hungry people.

The final article, “Technology That Will Save Billions from Starvation,” is a mixture of the two previous articles analyzed. It covers the same topics but goes into even more depth and explanation. Prakash and Conko (2004/2007) assert that farmers all over the world have increased their crop output with the help of genetically-modified crops. They discuss the countries that benefited from this technology and those that are still struggling (p. 422). According to Prakash and Conko, farmers who are lacking resources can use different methods to create these genetically-modified crops, so they can produce healthy, pest-resistant crops, and can benefit from the technology. Through work of researchers at Rutgers University and the Chinese Academy of Science, some positive results are explained that “bioengineered cotton in China has lowered the amount of pesticides by 75% (pp. 424-425). In the U.S., Prakash and Conko add that as a result of reduced pesticide
spraying, farmers are using "93 million fewer gallons of water (p. 425). Prakash and Conko note that the use of biotechnology offers more nutritional benefits in foods, such as Nerica rice and some potatoes, because they can be injected with vitamins and minerals needed to keep people nourished and healthy (p. 427). The authors conclude that hunger can not be solved unless biotechnology is embraced by the world. The strength of this article is that it provides detailed information on the positive aspects of biotechnology and how it could be used to help farmers increase their productivity. It illustrates that biotechnology presents many benefits to create healthier and more abundant crops. This article is limited though by the authors’ positive bias for biotechnology which they believe will benefit both farmers and consumers. This limitation is important because it offers only one clear point of view on the topic without acknowledging risks.

After reading, analyzing, and discussing all three of these articles, I find that each one has its own strengths and limitations. Demenet (2001) observes a specific type of genetically-modified food, but the source is limited by the author’s skepticism about the use of biotechnology. On the other hand, Belsie (2000) highlights the benefits of genetically-modified foods, and identifies why some people question this solution. The article is limited by Belsie’s positive view. Prakash and Conko
(2004/2007) offer a wide variety of information about the uses of biotechnology and the benefits for both farmers and consumers. The authors’ view that biotechnology is going to solve world hunger and have other positive effects for farmers limits the article. However, some important differences among these articles are that Demenet (2001) and Belsie (2000) provide good information, but are less specific than Prakash and Conko (2004/2007). Demenet covers one type of genetically-modified food and also questions the use of it. Belsie analyzes the uses of genetically-modified foods in general. However, Prakash and Conko include details as well as statistical information and examples about how different countries benefit from genetically-modified crops. Prakash and Conko (2004/2007) show a strictly positive view on the topic. Some implications for further research may be to critically examine the effects of biotechnology on the environment, and to determine if it is harmful or not. Overall, all three articles supply beneficial information; however, Prakash and Conko (2004/2007) offer the best material that has proven the most useful in my research paper about feeding the population.

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Critical Review of the Article Technology That Will Save Billions from Starvation

Amanda Sita

Neumann College

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The article “Technology That Will Save Billions from Starvation” by C.S Prakash and Gregory Conko was published initially on March 1, 2004 in The American Enterprise. Prakash is a scientific researcher, professor and director of the Center for Plant Biotechnology Research at Tuskegee University who also started the non-profit organization, AgBioWorld Foundation. Conko is vice president of this foundation as well as a director of a food safety policy. In this article, Prakash and Conko emphasize the necessity for biotechnology because of the advantages it offers to farmers and to those interested in solving the crisis of world hunger. Prakash and Conko provide a very convincing and informative argument because they offer detailed, supporting evidence about the positive effects of biotechnology on world hunger.

Prakash and Conko (2004/2007) inform readers about how genetically-modified crops can help to increase the amount of crops produced in the world to help eliminate world hunger. In this policy argument, they emphasize the economic advantage of such biotechnology. They illustrate that biotechnology is just as safe to use as other methods used for crop enhancement, such as hybridization and recombinant DNA. According to scientists,
biotechnologically-enhanced crops are just as safe for people to eat and as good for the environment as crops grown the traditional way (pp. 423-424). Prakash and Conko claim that it is thought that biotechnology will help to feed the rapidly-increasing population. They provide statistics with the number of hungry people around the world as well as the number of poor farmers who have benefited from bioengineered crops. For example, each night, 740 million people, mostly poor farmers, go to sleep hungry and malnourished all over the world. However, through the introduction of biotechnology, 5.5 million poor farmers have benefited from this solution because of their increased crop production (pp. 422-425). Prakash and Conko state that the nutritional value of the crops can be enhanced by adding specific vitamins to prevent malnutrition. They support this statement by providing an example of a study on Nerica Rice, a type of vitamin A enhanced food, done by the World Health Organization (p. 426). Prakash and Conko conclude that to produce enough food with the proper nutritional value, biotechnology must be embraced by the global population (p. 428).

In this article, Prakash and Conko (2004/2007) use facts to support their claims about biotechnology. They describe with statistical evidence the benefits that farmers globally gain from using bioengineered crops. The number of pesticides and pesticide
poisonings of Chinese farmers has been lowered by 75% after using bioengineered cotton (p. 425). Farmers in the United States also use fewer pesticides which results in 2.4 million fewer gallons of fuel applied to farming, and 93 million fewer gallons of water consumed (pp.424-425). Prakash and Conko support each idea with evidence, so they do not make any unsupported generalizations when arguing for biotechnology. Although Prakash and Conko verify that the facts they use are from a specific research group, they do not offer any documentation about where the information can be found. The facts seem to be true because of the examples and statistics presented; however, because this source is a policy argument, it does not include end references, which serves as a limitation. However, Prakash and Conko present their information in a very organized manner that allows an average person to understand the meaning of the scientific information which they provide.

In one section, Prakash and Conko (2004/2007) briefly mention the opposing view about biotechnology. They include a quote from Miguel Altieri, an anti-biotechnology activist, where he claims that biotechnology is not intended to help poor countries, but rather to make a profit from them (pp.425–426). However, Altieri’s viewpoint is disregarded, and Prakash and Conko note that many researchers working in under-developed countries
believe that biotechnology is definitely needed to stop hunger
issues (p. 426). Clearly, the authors have a strictly positive view
about biotechnology because they are trying to get the public to
accept biotechnology and think that it brings more good than harm.
The opposing view should be developed more thoroughly, so the
readers can see the opinions of both sides to gain a better
understanding of the issue. Their omission of the opposing view in
this article serves as another weakness. Prakash and Conko begin
and end this article with the stance that biotechnology will help to
solve the world’s problem of hunger and make crop production
more efficient for farmers. There is no sign in this article of any
unanswered questions or undeveloped answers. Prakash and
Conko offer plenty of support and evidence to help to exhibit their
stance clearly and convincingly to readers.

To conclude, this article is very good to those who want
to know about how bioengineered crops are created and used as
well as the benefits that they offer to the population. The most
significant point in this article is that with the drastic population
growth, biotechnology will be needed to provide an abundant
supply of safe and nutritious food to the poor. This article relates
to other research on this subject because it asserts the positive
aspect of biotechnology and how it will be used to stop world
hunger. However, this strictly positive view limits the article
because it avoids adequately acknowledging an opposing side. Yet, this limitation is important to the article because it provides a convincing argument for biotechnology by showing examples of the many advances and benefits that genetically-modified crops provide.

References

Biotechnology To Relieve World Hunger

Amanda Sita

Neumann College
Abstract

The hunger issue globally is rapidly increasing due to a lack of adequate food production. The population is thought to reach eight billion by the year 2030, and to feed this number of people, the amount of food produced will have to increase drastically. To produce enough safe and healthy food, biotechnology needs to be accepted by the world. Studies on the effects of biotechnology reveal both positive and negative outcomes. Negative views about biotechnology are based upon the possibility of allergens, harm to insects, and a decrease in income for farmers using traditional farming methods. In this essay, biotechnology is claimed to be a generally positive plan. Published research and statistics of biotechnology are cited.

Biotechnology to Relieve World Hunger

Hunger is a major issue globally with the number of starving and malnourished people continuing to rise each year. The cause of hunger in countries around the world is due primarily to poverty caused by inadequate farm yields and lack of land and resources for farmers to grow their own food. According to Prakash and Conko (2004/2007), every day there are 40,000 people of 740 million starving and malnourished who die (p. 422). Even more astounding is the fact that a person dies from hunger...
every 3.6 seconds (Coleman, 2005, p. 17). Furthermore, the population of people is continuing to increase each year, but if nothing is done to increase the food supply, the number of hungry people around the world will persist, and more people will die from the effects of famine. By the year 2030, the population is expected to reach eight billion, meaning that food production must increase by 60 percent to feed everyone. The only way to achieve this expanded food supply is through the use of biotechnology (p. 422). Although extensive research is still being conducted regarding the process of using biotechnology and its effects, many studies already have been completed. These studies reveal an array of results and opinions, both positive and negative.

Biotechnology, however, should be embraced globally because it can provide nutrition to people in poor countries, it can decrease the amount of harm caused to the environment by use of pesticides in traditional farming, and it can benefit poor farmers more than standard methods of farming.

Among the many starving countries around the world, Africa and South Asia account for a majority of the hungry population. African and Asian farmers are unable to grow the crops that they need because they do not have the appropriate weather conditions, such as sufficient rainfall for irrigation. They are also deprived of the proper resources to grow crops, such as
good soil conditions, pesticides and herbicides that are needed to yield crops (Prakash and Conko, 2004/2007, p. 425). In addition, the crops that are produced are sold for low prices to only a small number of consumers. This is because wealthy farmers are producing and selling more, which takes away from the income of poor farmers in under-developed countries (Rosset, 2005/2007, p. 435). For these countries to be more productive and escape hunger, better marginal zones for growing their crops and for escaping economic victimization are necessary.

Biotechnology is said to be the answer to the problems of these poor farmers. It has been used in the United States and in under-developed countries for the past fifty years. As a result, farm equity across the nation has increased by $200 million each year, and the farm-to-debt ratio has decreased by more than 45 percent. Farmers worldwide have yielded more than 250 million acres of bioengineered crops, seven percent of which the United States has contributed (Roberson, 2007, p. 2). In sections of under-developed nations, such as places in India and China, where people suffer from starvation and malnutrition, bioengineered crops have been introduced. Consequently, these poor farmers are now able to be more prosperous with their crop productions because the genetically-modified seeds are more affordable and less likely to be destroyed by poor weather, soil conditions, or
insects. Malnutrition has decreased globally by twenty percent in the past fifty-five years due to biotechnology (Prakash & Conko, 2004/2007, pp. 421-422).

Although the numbers show that biotechnology is beneficial to people globally, some studies have proven that genetically-modified foods cause possible risks to people as well as to animals. When certain genetically-modified foods were tested on rats, some of them were intoxicated by the foods that they ingested, and they died. These foods included tomatoes and corn that affected their digestion, and potatoes that were transformed with the pesticide, Bacillus thuringiensis, which caused the colon of the rat to enlarge. Scientists also found that genetically-modified foods injected with Bacillus thuringiensis caused allergic reactions on the skin of the farmers who were working in the fields with it. It is intended that this pesticide, as well as others, will be tested for definite allergic reactions; however, this is said to be impossible at the moment because there are no models for allergenicity testing that exist (Pusztai, 2001). Pusztai also states that there is little scientific study about the health risks to humans of the genetically-modified foods because tests can only be done on animals, not people; therefore, their effects on humans are still unknown. Despite the possibility of allergenic outbreaks and intoxication from these foods, there are a
A number of benefits, such as increased nutrition, that they offer to hungry people all over the world.

Many people in under-developed countries are malnourished and do not receive the proper amount of vitamins and protein each day. To help reduce the number of malnourished people, biotechnology should be accepted. Sandalow (2000) claims that with the use of biotechnology, foods are able to be enhanced with the nutrients that are needed to keep these poor people nourished and healthy. The crops, such as tomatoes and rice, can be enhanced with vitamins and minerals to allow people in under-developed countries to consume the necessary amount of nutrients that they need to survive (p. 73). There is a special kind of rice called “Golden Rice” or Nerica that is enhanced with beta-carotene to prevent vitamin A and iron deficiencies, so that diseases, such as blindness and impaired intellectual development can be avoided (Demenet, 2001, p. 2). According to Prakash and Conko, with the help of biotechnology, crops such as kidney beans will contain lower amounts of toxins, and other foods such as wheat and peanuts will be removed of allergens. In addition to ridding crops of these contaminant, scientists are also working on injecting vaccines for diseases such as hepatitis B into fruits and vegetables to help save the lives of many people (Prakash & Conko, 2004, pp. 426-427).
However, some people and organizations do not see biotechnology as healthy or safe. The British Medical Association believes that bioengineered crops only cause health risks of their own because they not only contain old allergens, but also new allergens. The organization argues that this method to solve world hunger will only make people sicker, not healthier (Ecologist, 2003, p. 2). Others argue that enriching the rice with beta-carotene is not good for people in under-developed countries, and will kill them. They question the use of enhanced foods and they claim that the amount of rice needed to make up for the lack of vitamin A is unknown (Demenet, 2001, p. 10).

Although some do not support biotechnology, the Catholic Church happens to believe that it is acceptable to use if it is approached with caution. The Church claims that people have been altering the genes of plants for years, and nothing bad has been known to come from it. It argues that genetically-modified foods are safe and healthy to use. The Church reasons that it is necessary to provide everyone with food to live a good life. It claims that it is an obligation to help the poor, and a moral responsibility to make sure that all people are helped (Coleman, 2005, p. 17). As the Church argues, genetically-modified foods have been around for years and have not done any harm to people. If they were so dangerous, they would not be introduced to the
In addition to offering health benefits to people, the environment also benefits from biotechnology.

Over the years, ordinary methods for farming, such as plowing and tilling have contributed to environmental degradation. Biotechnology can help prevent degradation of the earth in many ways. The main way that biotechnology helps the environment is by reducing the amount of plowing and tilling (Coleman, 2005, p. 16). According to Prakash and Conko (2004/2007), the amount of pesticides used in places such as China has dramatically dropped by more than 75 percent (p. 425). Grant (2008) adds that biotechnology has not only decreased the amount of pesticides by a half billion pounds, it also has reduced the amount of carbon emission from the ground because tilling is either minimally or no longer used (p. 13). By reducing the amount of pesticides used, other valuable resources to people are also able to be conserved.

Water that is used in ordinary farming can be reduced through the use of biotechnology. Grant claims that drought-tolerant corn is being produced which is more water efficient. He states that the plants absorb water more slowly instead of taking it out of the ground quickly in large amounts (p. 13). Prakash and Conko (2004/2007) also note that in the United States, farmers were able to reduce their consumption of water by 93 million gallons (p. 425). In addition to less water consumption, fuel consumption can
also be decreased with biotechnology. Because there is less plowing and pesticide spraying, the use of fuel is able to be eliminated. In the United States, the amount of fuel consumed in 2000 was reduced by 2.4 million gallons (Prakash & Conko, 2004/2007, p. 425). Cutting back on pesticide spraying allows for fewer resources to be consumed for the manufacture and transportation of the chemicals. Not only can biotechnology help to eliminate greenhouse gas emission and the use of natural resources, it also provides an alternative energy source. Roberson (2007) contemplates that since biotechnology is allowing farmers to produce more crops, biofuel could possibly be produced from the extra crop surpluses (p. 2). According to Grant (2008), every country has a greater surplus of different crops. In the United States, the surplus includes corn and soybeans, in Europe it is canola/ grapeseed oil, and in Asia, it is palm oil (p.10). These crops may help to solve the problem of dependence on petroleum because they are renewable resources. They will also reduce carbon emission into the air because they would not emit carbon dioxide and greenhouse gases (Biologist, 2007, p.66).

Although biotechnology can help the earth in many ways, many people think that it will be detrimental to the ecosystem. Shiva (2005/2007) argues that pesticides which are injected into the genetically-modified plants will be harmful to the
environment. She believes that toxins will be released by the plants, which then will be eaten by pollinating insects, and ultimately, it will kill them. The web of life will be destroyed because the insects that are needed to help the plants survive will be extinct, and the plants will die because chemicals can not keep them alive (pp. 453-454). Although there is the possibility of harming insects and the web of life, biotechnology should not be completely dismissed. For decades, crops have been genetically-modified and the same insects are still alive and pollinating. They will eventually learn to adapt to the new crops and the genes added to them. The insects will evolve over time to become resistant to the chemicals as they have in the past, so they do not become extinct. It is important to make sure that the web of life does not get interrupted; however, until there is significant evidence of insect populations being depleted, biotechnology should still be a possibility to use to solve hunger. Not only does the decrease in pesticide spray help to save the environment, it also benefits poor farmers as well.

Many farmers in poor countries have difficulty producing enough crops to sell because there are problems with insects or poor soil conditions and temperature. Belsie (2000) states that farmers will be able to produce abundant crop yields due to the pest-resistant traits in the genetically-modified plants. The
farmers will also have an easier time growing the plants because they will be less vulnerable to harsh weather conditions, such as drought (p. 3). According to Prakash and Conko (2004/2007), by packaging the seeds with the genes needed to modify them, they will be much easier for farmers to use. They would be able to control insects, bacterial, and viral pathogens, extremes to weather conditions, and poor soil quality when they use the genetically-modified seeds. Farmers in Africa who have very little rainfall and dry lands will be able to use these drought-resistant seeds. They will be able to grow crops with a minimal amount of water. Other plants will be injected with genes that cause them to withstand poor soils with high salinity or are acidic or alkaline (p. 425). Not only will biotechnology produce more crops by being resistant to certain environmental stressors, they will also save farmers time and labor. Roberson (2007) notes how farmers will be able to plant more crops by using less labor and equipment. They will not use much equipment because the plants are already pest-and weather-resistant (p. 2). Normal planting methods such as plowing and tilling will not be needed. Because they will not need to spend time in the fields plowing and tending to the crops, the farmers save themselves much time. In fact, they are now able to save 41,000 ten hour days that were used for the labor needed to care for the crops (Prakash & Conko, 2004/2007, p. 425). Another
The advantage that farmers have gained from reduced pesticide usage is a decrease in deaths from pesticide poisonings. When pesticides were sprayed by hand, 400 to 500 farmers suffered from pesticide poisonings and died, especially in China and Africa. Since biotechnology has been introduced to them, the number of pesticides and pesticide poisonings has been reduced by 75 percent (Prakash & Conko, 2004/2007, p. 424). However, Jordan (2002) claims that the addition of pesticides and herbicides in plants will only cause more damage to farmers. He believes that because the plants will be resistant to pests and diseases, farmers will now have an oversupply of crops, resulting in a decline in income. The situation will not be helped; it will be worsened (p. 523). Rosset (2005/2007) also notes that there are negative effects of using biotechnology for poor farmers. First of all, they would not be able to afford the transgenic seeds, as the wealthy farmers can. Also, many poor farmers do not use insecticide when they plant crops; by using biotechnology, they would have to completely change their way of farming. Herbicide and pest-resistant crops make little sense to poor farmers because they believe that the chemicals will destroy their crop yields (p. 438).

These claims may be true; however, if the world needs to produce a large quantity of food for the rapidly-growing population of starving people, there should not be a decline in the
income of farmers. If anything, it should increase because the food is in such high demand. Also, the government is trying to make these genetically-modified seeds available at cheaper prices for the poor farmers. Eventually, it is hoped that there will be enough support for biotechnology that farmers will be able to obtain the seeds for free. The government is making sure that it can help these farmers move forward, not backward with their income. Farmers will benefit more from biotechnology because farming will be easier for them, and they will be able to produce and sell healthier crops.

To end the problem of hunger in the world, biotechnology needs to be supported. It will not only provide better nutrition for people in under-developed countries, but also it will cause less damage to the environment, and it will benefit poor farmers in many ways. Although there are possibilities that it can create new allergens and health risks for people or harm insects, the chances of overcoming these problems are much greater. People and insects can adapt to changes just as they have to foods that have been genetically altered in the past. There have not been enough studies completed to prove that allergic reactions definitely occur from these crops, so genetically-modified crops should not be completely dismissed. There is also the possibility of overproduction for farmers. However, it is better that they have
too much rather than too little, as then there will always be enough food for those in need. Despite possible negative outcomes, biotechnology offers a variety of opportunities to improve the situation of hunger by creating safer, healthier and larger crop yields for farmers. People need to support the idea of biotechnology so that world hunger can be minimized, and eventually ended.
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Hunger: Many people around the world are dying from hunger and malnutrition, especially in under-developed countries, such as those in Africa and South Asia. On a daily basis, 740 million people in these countries go to sleep hungry, and about 40,000 of them die. Hunger is caused by poverty because farmers lack the proper amount of land and resources to grow their own food, which leads to inadequate farm yields.

Biotechnology: Biotechnology is a process to create genetically-altered crops to improve their nutritional value, and to improve their ability to resist pesticides, herbicides and harsh environmental conditions, such as weather and soil salinity.

Nutrition: Scientists have begun to enhance crops with vitamins and minerals to help reduce the number of malnourished people in under-developed countries. Crops such as tomatoes and rice, such as “Golden Rice” have been engineered. Some have been injected with beta-carotene to help prevent vitamin A and iron deficiencies. These genetically-altered foods help to prevent blindness and impaired intellectual development.

Environmental Safety: Biotechnology can help to prevent environmental degradation. It reduced the amount of pesticides sprayed by 75 percent in China, and it has decreased the amount of pesticides used globally by half a billion pounds. Because plowing and tilling are no longer needed with genetically-modified crops, carbon emissions released by the soil have declined as well. In addition, fewer resources, such as water and fuel are consumed on a daily basis. The consumption of water has been lowered by 93 million gallons in the United States, and the consumption of fuel has been reduced by 2.4 million gallons.

Farmers: Farmers have benefited from bioengineered crops in many ways. These crops allow farmers to control pests, bacterial and viral pathogens, extremes to weather conditions and poor soil quality. Genetically-modified seeds helped to lower the amount of pesticide poisonings in China by 75 percent because the sprays are no longer needed. Because the crops no longer need to be plowed and tilled, farmers are able to save 41,000 ten-hour days each year because the crops are resistant to drought, poor soil conditions and pesticides. Thus, farmers are now able to increase their crop yields because they do not have to worry about losing their crops due to uncontrollable factors.