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English 110-G

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Soylent: The End of an Enjoyable Life (edit)

Food, it's the substance that gives many people comfort, allows us to thrive and gives us the energy we need for life. It easily consumes many people's days. Breakfast, lunch and dinner, it seems to be all we have time for, but, what is it about really? I find myself asking that question more and more these days. Recently, in 2014, the article "The End of Food" by Lizzie Widdicombe was released. This article brings forth the issue of the importance of food, whether it is just purely a burden that can be solved by a simple solution of a thick shake, or whether it has an emotional and satisfying connection to it. The article introduces the idea of Soylent, which is a drink invented by Rob Rhinehart. Soylent contains all the necessary nutrients for life and would act as a possible alternative to eating regular meals. It could allow many people to eliminate loss of time from eating meals, and almost industrialize food as a utility rather than an enjoyable concept. Soylent is also rather inexpensive in comparison to other foods you may have to consume to reach all the essential nutrients Soylent contains.

The downfall, though, is the loss of any emotional connection or pleasure some receive from the variety of food and favorite recipes they possess. It also takes away from many social interactions you receive while sharing meals with family, friends and acquaintances. Business meetings held at restaurants would occur far less often and college friends gathering for wing night at their favorite restaurant would begin to fade out. This loss of interaction could mean for a step back in communication skills and overall happiness for many individuals. While Soylent

Commented [MC1]: Good introduction to the Widdicombe article. Try putting some more comas in to have it flow easier. For example, take out the period before the first "this article" and make that into one sentence(...released and it brings forth...). Also make sure you quote Widdicombe at the end since you are pulling ideas from her article

Commented [MC2]: This seems like a good place to introduce your favorite meal essay and you can briefly describe that like how you did with the Widdicombe piece. You mention the social part of eating a lot in this, but is this your only point for Soylent? If you talk about flavor or time you could also mention that in this section.

Commented [MC3]: Your thesis is great!! I like how your view point is clear and it gives good direction to where your paper will be going. You mention many different aspects about food in it though (6 if I am counting right). Is there some way you could generalize it to make your thesis shorter? You do not have to list every point you are going to be making when there is many parts because the reader is going to see all of them. Keeping it general I think will intrigue the reader and make them think about why you have that opinion, instead of laying all of your cards out.

may provide more time and make it easier to receive essential nutrients, it should not eliminate food because food gives us pleasure and satisfaction; it inhibits social interactions and provides us with countless memories.

Take a minute, think about the concept of food, think about the satisfaction you get from taking a bite of a favorite meal, or first sip from a **good drink**. In an instant, that could all be gone. Rob Rhinehart's idea of Soylent would take away all pleasure in taking that first bite of an enjoyable meal—the taste may not be terrible, but it is certainly not as fulfilling as an elaborate meal. In Widdicombe's article, she mentions "People tend to find the taste of Soylent to be familiar: the predominant sensation is one of doughiness. The liquid is smooth but grainy in your mouth, and it has a yeasty, comforting blandness about it. I've heard tasters compare it to Cream of Wheat, and 'my grandpa's Metamucil'" (Widdicombe 7). Widdicombe is merely giving a statement about how most individuals find the taste of Soylent. Although it is tolerable, it is still described as bland and grainy and it has even been compared to **Metamucil, a daily stool softener**. While this may sound okay for some, eventually the taste will become redundant and you will be searching for something more. With food, you have options to explore. There are so many different meals to satisfy your taste buds and bring happiness to your stomach.

Everyone has a few meals that they just cannot turn down when it gets offered to them, the meals that provide **comfort**. Whether it's a batch of pancakes or a beautifully grilled burger, there is something about certain foods that we cannot just turn down. These foods provide us with the ultimate satisfaction we cannot find anywhere else. If Soylent becomes our only source of food, what would we do to find that satisfaction? Many people would not be as happy as they used to be with their simple meal fix. So many people will lose the comfort they find so easily when gravitating toward the food that brings them pleasure and comfort, and for what purpose?

Commented [MC4]: LOVE THIS! This would be a really nice place to put your fav meal essay quote in, so the reader can better imagine real food v. Soylent. You made a good start to develop the contrast, but I think including a quote or some kind of sensory imagery will make Soylent appear more bland. For example, you could do like cold lemonade on a hot day, or some warm hoco after a day outside, freshly brewed coffee, etc

Commented [MC5]: Good idea to describe what's mentioned in the quote. Maybe instead of repeating the words exactly from the quote you could find some words with negative connotations to make it appear even worse or meal quote to emphasize the contrast between real food and Soylent

Commented [MC6]: I like how you are going into the contrast between real food v. Soylent. Have you considered diving deeper into the countless flavors there are with real food? I think this would give readers the perspective of how they would be losing taste since Soylent is so bland. Also you may want to change up some of the words. You mention comfort and satisfaction a few times in this paragraph. Maybe this is just a me thing, but when I think about food and satisfaction I think about if I am full and the nutritional value, not the taste satisfaction which you are implying.

Why should we set aside happiness for some goopy drink? In my favorite meal essay, I talk about the joy I get from taking that first bite of food, “when you take that first bite of eggs, you are completely content and know the rest of the day is going to be a good one” (Moura 2). My favorite meal provides me with an amazing start to my day. It provides me with a unique kind of comfort, one you would never imagine food can give, but it does. Without these perfect meals, we could never be fully satisfied so easily or brought to a certain level of happiness that only food can bring.

Not only does food bring us pleasure and comfort, it also provides us with a way to be social and an excuse to be with those we find important to us. This could go hand in hand with time. There is only so much time in a day, a month, a year and a life, what you decide to do with that time is what can define how your life is spent. Some want more time and others feel they have too much time. SoyLent could provide the world with more time in their everyday life, but it would also take away quality time you get with wide ranges of people. In Widdecombe’s article, she talks about how much time she had during her day while taking SoyLent, “time stretches before you, featureless and a little sad” (Widdecombe 14). This takes you toward the idea that yeah, you might end up with a lot of time that in some circumstances can be productive, but in others it is depressing, and you don’t have enjoyment to fill that time with. With this more time, you would power through working or studying, and it will take away the simple joy we have in an excuse of having to eat and enabling us to spend some time with friends. Simply instead of spending time with friends over lunch, you will already have had your meal for the time and go on to continuing with work. Not only does it effect the time in your day and what it is filled with but, also downplays and takes away opportunities for memories.

Commented [MC7]: I like this topic sentence, but this paragraph is not about it. You set up the paragraph like you will be promoting the social aspects of eating, but instead you discuss how antisocial SoyLent is. I would recommend changing the sentence or incorporating a sentence or 2 about how meals are social events. You could use your college experience as an example

Commented [MC8]: This is a good point, but I feel like it could be more effective split up into 2 different paragraphs. You could set up SoyLent as a positive and how you would obtain more time, and then the second would describe the negatives of too much time and what you would lose(aka fav meal/social interactions/friends)
PS you don't need to cite yourself in the paragraph above

Commented [MC9]: Figure out what you want this quote to focus on. You introduce it like you do not get to meet people, and after you focus shifts to how you will be more productive. What if one spends their extra time with family or out with friends? What if they get distracted with their extra time and instead become less productive?

Memories can be described as moments in time that we will specifically remember forever. Food can bring us those memories. Throughout the years, memories have been made over sharing many different meals. It has been brought through food that is made specially for holidays and just generally spending time with family while it is being cooked. For a long time, I have made memories over enjoying food with the people I love. My entire family enjoys trying different meals as well as the common daily meals. We interact over it, it is something that brings us all together. In my favorite meal essay, I describe just how much food makes memories for me, “We even bought my Vovo a bell to ring, so we know when to come up for breakfast. It brings us back together again, and sometimes even brings others in as well” (Moura 3). In buying my Vovo a bell, it brought the memory of times when I would hear it ring while being at the pool and immediately thinking its time to get dressed and go up for some amazing food. Although it doesn’t happen as often now it is something I will always know I have in my heart.

If you look back now, there are so many reasons Soy lent should not be the new source of food, it should not eliminate it. Without food, we never would have the connections we have, we would never feel as much joy and pleasure that we could, and we would not have as many amazing memories. Not even just for yourself but think about everyone out there. What would happen if you took away others’ happiness by only allowing them Soy lent. Or if you ruined memories that you thought could continue forever and it got taken away by simply eliminating food from the equation. Remember that life is not just about being healthy and surviving, it is about living in the moment and making the most out of your entire life.

Commented [MC10]: You could make a connection to Pavlov’s dogs. They received food when a bell went off, and eventually salivated at the sound of the bell. This would be a good comparison to make to show how you were eager for food before you even got to the kitchen

Commented [MC11]: What kind of food? Can you give any sensory images? Like could you smell stuff from the kitchen or grill? Was the kitchen warm from cooking? How did the food feel in your stomach?

Commented [MC12]: Not necessarily why Soy lent should not, but more of why food/meals will not get replaced. From what I gather from your essay, you do more talking about the benefits of food and how Soy lent’s flaws brings out the essential parts of food and meals that humans enjoy.

Works Cited

Widdicombe, Lizzie. "The End of Food ." *The End of Food* , The New Yorker , 12 May 2014,
www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/05/12/the-end-of-food.

Dear Julia,

I found your paper really interesting. Your organization was great and you effortlessly included quotes. To improve I would try to include as much sensory detail as you can. You can describe the consistency of Soylent or how eggs make you feel, but can you make this into an image rather than explaining it. I liked how you had contrast paragraph to paragraph, but including a bit less explaining and more evidence (quotes, imagines, personal experiences) will make your argument stronger. Taste, time, and memories are your 3 big ideas, but out of that you can break it up into smaller sections, so you are able to go into more detail in one paragraph about a particular section. Additionally, make sure your topic sentence matches what you are discussing in the paragraph. This is apparent to me in the 5th paragraph, but just make sure you keep focus in one paragraph. If there is more than 1 idea break it up into a couple of smaller paragraphs. Finally, I would look back at the quotes you have. You introduced them all beautifully, but after you state the quote, your analysis after seems a bit rushed. I noticed this in the fourth and sixth paragraph (eggs quote and vovo quote). After explaining the quote, you should go more into why this is important. I liked how you did it in the third paragraph when you talked about the taste becoming redundant, but with the eggs quote and vovo quote you need to explain why this would be missed if it was only Soylent, or how this is what makes us human.