

Tanner Figueiredo

Professor Miller

English 110-G

20 February 2019

This Might Sound Cheesy

Food is our way of life, a way of living our lives to the fullest, enjoying the time we have while eating. We are spoiled by our taste buds and our sense of smell and sight and hooked on tantalizing, delicious, aromatic meals. So how can I agree with many of the assertions of Soylent in the article *The End of Food* written by Lizzie Widdicombe? **A** scientific approach of the replacement food “Soylent” in this article is the one way to eliminate the gray, but the article admits that research is lacking to support some of the claims.

Commented [JM1]: I might consider adding in a little more background on Widdicombe’s article.

I found an article that better mimics my **feelings**, *Minimalist Food For a Streamlined Life* by Stephen Assink states “However long humans have been eating, they have been doing it together. From the first hunter-gatherer societies to our contemporary haute cuisine, food has always been enmeshed in elaborate social rituals, codes, mores, and expectations. Anthropologists have for some time observed that food is a window into how a society functions. Though food can segregate people along class, ethnic, and religious lines, it can also bring together and solidify communities. If it is true then that we are what we eat, what does it say if all our meals are exactly the same and eaten alone?”

Commented [JM2]: I love that you brought in another article. It brings in a good aspect that you found for your own feelings. I do believe though that with such a long quote, you could make it to be a block quote. The quote should also include a little more explanation at the end before moving on to the next paragraph.

Assink article does allow Rob Rhinehart his vision on his Soylent **product**, “But, Rhinehart says, that’s not exactly his vision. “Most of people’s meals are forgettable,” he told me. He imagines that, in the future, “we’ll see a separation between our meals for utility and function, and our meals for experience and socialization.” Soylent isn’t coming for our Sunday

Commented [JM3]: You could try and add a little more context before starting right into another quote.

potlucks. It's coming for our frozen quesadillas. But according to Widdicombe, "The Soylent dream is a strange one: a place where our food-related hopes mingle with our nightmares." If you spend enough time with Rhinehart, though, it can start to take hold. Perhaps its appeal depends on how you feel about the dreamer. Though I think it is a great idea in theory, helping out many people with bad time **management**, I still maintain that Soylent can't be a food solver in itself. For example, some people enjoy the times we have when eating food at either a cookout or wherever people like to celebrate. Although some might object that that don't enjoy the time spent with others eating, I would reply that its been our way of life, our way of meeting new people. What is life without food? **Without** holidays where we gather around the dining room table?

If I understand the meaning behind the writer's statement about the dreams and nightmares about food, it's easy to proceed here with my responses to it. I believe Widdicombe speaks about Rhinehart's dream and about the hope to streamline our lives. I was totally blown away in her article where she mentions all the financial backers to his **idea**. Starting from his "crowd-funding" campaign and raising a ton money in a few hours, to having a blog and having his formula on-line that appealed to "D-Y-Iers", to students in a dorm at Cal Tech who loved the idea of Soylent and were happy sitting at their computers sipping Rhinehart's Soylent. This made me realize that there is a gray area on my position and that my belief that the food I know and love right now is one thing, but as a college student might this not be an alternative for me, too? My parents and I spend a lot of money on my food; I spend a lot of time consuming food. However, I feel it would be too much to get use to if I had to convert to Soylent's "Cream of Wheat" tasting **drink**. I certainly admire Rhinehart, as the co-founder of Soylent, he and several friends started out with an idea to make inexpensive cell phone towers which proved difficult to

Commented [JM4]: This point is really valid but does not fully connect to the message the quote is stating, I think you could find a better quote to support time management, for instance during the college part of Widdicombe's article.

Commented [JM5]: I love the rhetorical questions here, I think this might be an excellent place to bring in your favorite meal essay, to paint a picture of how life is with food.

Commented [JM6]: These are excellent support bringing in the simple quotes, be sure to cite the source for each one.

Commented [JM7]: I love that you bring in how you may not be able to do it as well as show a sort of appreciation for Rhinehart.

accomplish, and then hit it out the park on the synthetic food business. Further, I wish I could come up with a money making idea similar to that of Silicon Valley's "lifehackers". These were people who had a concept of streamlining the obligations of daily life so one would have the means to do all the things you wanted to do and not just the necessary things. Lifehackers really took to the idea of Soylent. Once again it appeals to me in theory when I consider trying to do school work, eat meals, do laundry, clean my room, and have time to play soccer and go skiing - the two things I love to do. Still, I am a skeptical.

As I was doing some reading along the lines of this article, I learned that scientists and government agencies for years have been working on solutions to ending world poverty. Widdicombe spent a fair amount of time with Rhinehart listening to his dreams and vision, trying his product and making her own chocolate slurpy, but preferring his recipe as more pleasant. She found that one of Rhinehart's latest dreams is to produce Soylent using algae (ugh) as the basis of the formula and to eliminate the need for farming to solve the world's hunger. He has really bit off a huge undertaking in my estimation if governments haven't been able to do this yet, but there may be a need to do something in the near future if civilization will continue to exist as we know it. If that's a dream, it is also a nightmare from my viewpoint; I would hate eating an algae based Soylent instead of sitting down with my family and relatives for a Portuguese feast.

On the other hand, today's food supply is filled with additives, pollutants, adulterants and poisons. I have noticed that the television news is constantly headlining various recalls on lettuce, romaine, and other produce and meat products. Food that you think is healthy for you may not be so until all foods are better regulated. It makes me wonder about what I am eating in my Portuguese Kale Soup that may not be good for me. Government food regulatory agencies need to step up and make crucial decisions to resolve the food crisis may be coming. And today's

Commented [JM8]: Interesting point to include, I enjoy the personal inclusion, but I am unsure as if it is needed to support your claims.

Commented [JM9]: Maybe add in this point somewhere in the essay that you touch upon time. It caused some confusion on if it should fit here.

Commented [JM10]: Is there a specific article that you found this?

Commented [JM11]: Is the taste really needed here? I think you can strengthen your point in another way.

Commented [JM12]: If used against poverty would everyone need to have it or only those within lower class so they could use their money towards other things instead of food?

Commented [JM13]: Love that you are bringing in th personal aspect! Maybe add a point from your favorite meal essay?

Commented [JM14]: I love this part, I would work on connecting it to how Soylent could help with solving this issue.

chemically intensive farming with fertilizers has compromised our soil and water and put a strain on our global food supplies. I think this is a paradox, that since the rise of the large-scale food production we have now, there is the resulting decline in nutritional quality. It is making people overweight, yet many people in the world cannot get enough to eat.

Another nightmare regarding Soylent is it is impossible to make it both total sustenance and pleasurable at the same time. I found an article in the New York Times under the section State of the Art and titled *The Soylent Revolution Will not be Pleasurable* to support this claim. “Soylent’s fatal flaw is that it can’t offer both. It optimizes for total sustenance at the expense of any pleasure. So while the drink might be nutritionally preferable to eating a diet of pizza, ramen and frozen dinners, I doubt it would be more pleasurable than doing so. There’s a lot of variety in pizza and ramen.” Soylent, meanwhile, will always be just the same. Rhinehart feels you can have your pizza and still have Soylent. I did find it interesting that NASA is interested in it as are hospitals and I surmise the military. They have for a long time used Soylent type of food in space missions and the army has provided soldiers in the field with ration packs and hospitals liquid diets to patients. I don’t think I would survive in outer space or the army and I have no interest in being in the hospital.

The taste of Soylent sounds like a boring, joyless food product in my opinion. It may offer complete nourishment (although that is debatable without the addition of phytochemicals that come from plants) since you may not live maximally stated Walter Willett, the chair of the nutrition department at Harvard School of Public Health who Widdicombe cited. He also said “We’re concerned much more than just surviving.”

Rhinehart has found quite a following and maybe he is on to something with Soylent, but I would recommend a name change although he did it on purpose knowing that some people

Commented [JM15]: I love that you brought in another article here, I would try to also bring in points from your favorite meal essay along with Widdicombe’s article to support your points here.

Commented [JM16]: I don’t think this last sentence is needed here, it shifts the focus of the paper and brings some confusion to the reader.

Commented [JM17]: I would elaborate more on the taste and when bringing in the medical aspects I would bring in a quote from Widdicombe’s article that discusses that it includes the essential nutrients but lacks others that aid in the protection in some diseases.

would think of the movie *Soylent Green*. I find that the benefit of Soylent giving you an inexpensive food and more time in your day doesn't compare to the benefits that real food can give you. Widdicombe states this as a downside, too. I certainly look forward to my meals, especially with my family and even more so at gatherings with my Portuguese relatives. I love to go out with my friends and eat, too. But being in college, I find it difficult at times to sit down and eat a meal; is this a paradox of never giving up on eating and loving the food I am accustomed to, but still appreciating the need for a product like Soylent to supply me with food nutrients at paper writing/exam times?

Commented [JM18]: This is a good inclusion using your personal life as support, I find you could use an inclusion from your favorite meal essay here.

In conclusion, I do give up eating a meal here or there out of the need to study or because of soccer practice, but consuming Soylent as a lifestyle is a no for me. I am more in favor of the pleasures of food such as chewing it and eating different textures. Yes, Rhinehart is right, there are some forgettable meals, but in my life the seesaw swings more to satisfying, delicious food like the Portuguese Kale Soup I wrote about in Part One. These are very memorable meals and occasions for me, and I would never want to go without them. Soylent for utility and function maybe, but I'm firm about the benefit of food for experience and socialization!

Commented [JM19]: Overall I would dial it all back to a thesis.

Works Cited

1. Widdicombe, Lizzie, and Lizzie Widdicombe. "The End of Food." *The New Yorker*, The New Yorker, 19 June 2017, www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/05/12/the-end-of-food.
2. "Minimalist Food For a Streamlined Life." *The Hedgehog Review*, 16 May 2014, iasc-culture.org/THR/channels/THR/2014/05/minimalist-food-for-a-streamlined-life/.

*Dear Tanner,

I think your paper has beneficial points in it. I love the aspect of bringing in other papers into it. I do however feel that you should try to include more evidence from your own favorite meal essay. You use a wide variety of personal feelings on the subject matter and you could definitely support those more with features from your own essay. The quotations that you have in there right now are all strong, but I think that you can most definitely build off of them a little more. The overall structure of the essay was a little confusing, your ideas were all there, but I believe you can connect them together more, so they are more cohesive with each other. I also think you could come up with a really strong thesis statement to your essay and connect back to it at the end of it. Maybe add in some more background within your introduction as well. I love all of the main points of this essay and believe it has a lot of potential.