

1.0 Example
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ENG 101-XX
Cover Letter

Dear Reader,

My name is XXXXXX. This is my first semester in college after graduating high school. After getting my associate's degree, I plan to go Columbia College Downtown Chicago for Musical Theatre and Performance. I am aspiring to be a great actor on Broadway. On the other hand, school has always kind of been a hassle for me just because when the first time I get something wrong in a class I stress out in the class for the entire semester. I have been through this method in this English class for sure; especially because I am not a great writer. But in the end, I do the assignments that I have to do. This English course has been tough but I feel that I have done quite well on the final papers. In my short essay, I chose to respond to the article "Why We Hate Fat People". In my essay I chose to agree with J. Eric Oliver's mindset on how he felt that Americans put too much emphasis on obesity when there are so many things we need to worry about in this country.

In my In-class essay, "The Singer Solution to World Poverty", I expressed that being able to donate money to children isn't something people have to do, it is something that people should want to do. I said this because Peter Singer's argument was that everyone should donate money to people who needs it but you can't tell people what to do with their money because they earned that so could the next person earn it.

In my long essay, I chose to agree and disagree with Eric Wilson's Against Happiness. I did both because he had great but also low points. Because he feels that people should go through sorrow as much as they do joy because they should be able to earn that and I agreed on that but in my paper there are various reasons why I disagree.

Overall I feel that even though I am not a great writer I did a good job on my essays because it took a lot of determination and focus for me to finish it. In this class I have improved how I write my essays from the past. I hope you enjoy these essays I have written because I put a lot of work into them and I put my best foot forward!!!

Sincerely,
XXXXXX

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Short Essay

Losing The Focus on Obesity

In Eric Oliver's 2005 Chicago Sun Times essay, *Why We Hate Fat People* he argues that American attitudes towards obese people are extremely negative. American's views towards obese people are similar to how they view other marginalized groups in America. Those negative views towards obese people shows how prejudice and ignorant some American's can be. Oliver explains how the real problem behind obesity is how fearful the American culture is, because there are so many other issues than just that. We as Americans put too much of unnecessary focus on obesity.

American 's negative attitudes towards obese people are ignorant and prejudice. Oliver explains how thin Americans see obese people and think they have no one but themselves to blame for their condition. I believe that this is true; people make assumptions about obese people before even having a conversation with them. You never know the story behind that person's life and why they are that way. It is never right to pre judge someone. Oliver explains how Americans feel that obese people are unwilling to take responsibility for their own actions. According to Oliver, "The ideology that underscores this prejudice is an ethos of individualism and self-reliance." (Oliver 250) Oliver explains that similar to how American's view minority races, "fat people are thought to violate some of the most fundamental tenets in American political culture: that all people are fundamentally responsible for their own welfare; that self- control and restraint are hallmarks of virtue; and that all Americans are obliged to work at improving themselves" (Oliver 250) So many American's now days are selfish and only look out for themselves, and if someone does not fit under their category of what is right they judge that person. Americans have to learn how not to be so harsh and judgmental but instead learn how to be more accepting.

American 's views towards obese people are similar to how they view other marginal ized groups in America. According to Oliver, "Americans criticize fat people and you'll find rationalizations

that are remarkably similar to those historically used to justify negative attitudes toward all marginalized groups in America.” (Oliver 250) American’s individualistic and prejudice attitudes towards obese are the same attitudes they have towards poor people. Many American’s hate that poor people get welfare, because they feel it shows a lack of self-reliance and individual responsibility. I agree with Oliver when he explains, “This individualistic ethos thus serves as an important rationale for justifying the tremendous gulf between rich and poor in the United States: barring a few exceptions, if people are poor, they only have themselves to blame.” (Oliver 250) Oliver explains that now days many white Americans embrace racial equality, but many white American’s remain racially bias. He explains that some whites believe that blacks are unable to live up to the individualistic norms of self-reliance. I believe that some whites do view blacks this way, but I disagree with this kind of thinking. There are so many minorities in the world that are doing great things and succeeding in life. Some minorities may not be succeeding in life, but that does not give people the right to judge; just like obese and poor people we do not know the story behind that person’s life.

In today ‘s world, there are much more serious issues going on in America than just obesity. Americans stress over so many other things besides obesity for example: crime, terrorism, drugs, environmental collapse, and economic decline. American’s are so worried about judging others and they sometime forget about more serious issues. According to Oliver, “The average American child is one hundred times more likely to die by drowning in a pool than from a gun.” If a parent knows a gun is around they are going to keep their child away, but parents will allow their child to go swimming with no problem. Things like this show me how hypocritical American’s can be, because it is a parent’s individual responsibility to keep their child safe. I have seen many parents leave there children unsupervised in the poo1 and that is dangerous. American’s do things like this all ofthe time but then they are quick to judge someone else. According to Oliver in 2004, “43,000 Americans died in automobile wrecks, far more than

the numbers estimated to have died from weighing too much.” (Oliver 252) Everybody makes mistakes and puts themselves in bad situations at times so no one has room to judge anyone else.

J. Eric Oliver’s Chicago Sun Times essay, Why We Hate Fat People has a positive message that people can learn from. After reading the essay I saw how harsh American’s and just people in general can be at times. No one deserves to be treated or looked at the way some Americans do to obese people. I strongly believe that people should not look down on other marginalized groups either, because we would not want anyone looking down on us. We can not judge people until we know there story. When you pre judge someone you are not giving them the proper respect they deserve. No one should be able to pre judge, because we all make mistakes, no matter how big or small we all make mistakes. People should stop putting so much focus on obese people and focus more on their own lives.

Works Cited

J. Eric Oliver: Why We Hate Fat People

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In-Class Essay

In the essay “The Singer Solution to World Poverty”, Peter Singer tells his audience that if you have a wealthy life or if you just make some kind of money, you should donate money to children that need it. In this essay, Singer talks about a specific kind of children; children overseas. He argues that “An American household with an income of \$50,000 spends around \$30,000 annually on necessities and that if your income is \$50,000, donations to help the world’s poor should as close as possible to \$20,000”.(par.190) I agree and I also disagree with this statement.

I agree because as people we should not be spending so much money on things that we don’t need to survive. On the other hand I disagree because in this statement he says “Americans have to give this amount of money to other countries that are in need”, but he does not mention about wealthy people in other countries. And as people we should go after the things we want in life. If we work hard for the things we want we should be able to buy them. Although we should have the right to buy whatever we want because we worked for it we should still donate some of it to the poor. Being able to donate money to children isn’t something people have to do, Its something that people should want to do.

In this essay, he gives us different scenarios about people who have done things for children even though they had lavish lifestyles. In the beginning of this essay, Singer points out a film “Central station”, where a retired schoolteacher sends a 9-year-old homeless boy to wealthy foreigners in exchange of a \$1,000. As she settled in to her new things she bought, the foreigners inform her that the boy was too old for them to adopt and that he would be killed and have his organs sold for transplantation. And although she had the ability to let the boy died she took him back anyway.(par. 30-40) In this case, I feel that even though she didn’t donate any money to the boy she took him in herself

and put shelter over his head and fed him. He does not bring the argument of that by the teacher taking him in that was basically giving a donation to the child that was in need.

Singer mentions that

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Long Essay

Can People Have Joy Without Sorrow?

In Eric G. Wilson's book, *Against Happiness*, Wilson states that the American people put too much emphasis on the fact of being happy and by forgetting that sadness is a part of life, it can become dangerous. (6) Wilson states that it isn't possible for people to be happy in the midst of all of their problems but claims that you can be happy if you have been through long suffering because you deserve that right to do so. He claims that the study of "Positive Psychology is devoted to finding ways to enhance happiness through pleasure, engagement, and meaning." (5) According to the article, *Positive Psychology Progress*, Positive Psychology is an umbrella term for the study of positive emotions, positive character traits, and enabling institutions. Although I agree with Wilson up to a point, I cannot accept his overriding assumption that positive psychology aims to make people feel that they can have joy without sorrow.

Sadness is a part of life; without it we are in danger. In *Against Happiness*, Wilson states that "I for one am afraid that our American culture's overemphasis on happiness at the expense of sadness might be dangerous, a wanton forgetting of an essential part of life." (6) I want to stress that having overemphasis on happiness is not a bad or good thing. Because the truth of the matter is that none of us are truly happy because if that were to be true we would have peace on earth, we would not have tragedy etc. . . In James Poniewozik's article, *The Art of Happiness*, He states that "Happiness is not just an ideal but an ideology." This statement means that happiness is not the standard model of perfection it just characterizes the thinking of a group or nation; and it has certainly characterized America. In America, you see people greeting each other with smiles, giving hugs to friends, and colleagues laughing amongst one another. Even though we see people doing these things it does not mean that everyone is just happy go lucky it means that people deal with their trials in privacy. It doesn't hurt to be happy so why not be it all of the time? I asked myself this question after the first time I read *Against Happiness* but the

answer to that question is this: If I never went through suffering or sorrow in my life I would never know what happiness would feel like because that would be the only feeling I would ever know about.

You can be happy you have been through long suffering because you deserve that right to do so. In

Against Happiness, Wilson states " I'm not criticizing that slow burning bliss that issues from a life spent helping those that hurt." (7) This statement is correct in so many ways because people that have been

hurt in life should deserve the right to have some kind of happiness. According to Barbara Ehrenreich's

excerpt Bright Sided, she states " We can all say that on many levels, individual and social, it is good to be positive, certainly better than being withdrawn, aggrieved, or chronically sad." (2) Yes, it is good to be

positive even when times are looking rough because most of the time the outcome is much better that way.

In Against Happiness, two words that were sprinkled throughout the entire text that stood out to me were Depression and Melancholia. He stated "Depression(as I see it, at least) causes apathy in the face of the unease, lethargy approaching total paralysis, an inability to feel much of anything one way or another. In contrast, melancholia(in my eyes) generates a deep feeling in regard to this same anxiety, a turbulence of heart that results in an active questioning of the status quo, a perpetual longing to create new ways of being and seeing." (8) Although he disagrees with the fact that Melancholia (Americans) take antidepressants to ease their pain that they are feeling they are going through, he has no problem with the clinically depressed that have to take heavy medicine for their problems. In There 's Nothing Deep about Depression, Peter D. Kramer states that "Depression has been linked with harm to the heart, to endocrine, to bones." This statement means that depression actually does damage to your body. That is why Wilson says that he thinks it is okay to take medicine for depression. Wilson also claims that since we have fallen into our well-worn happy actions then we might as well be robots. It is clear that Wilson feels that our culture may get so caught up in being "happy" that if we continue to be this way then we are basically like robots- having any feelings at all.

In conclusion, I have expressed how I feel about Wilson's ideas on Against Happiness and I have also expressed how other authors feel about this topic. I hope you have a clear understanding of why I feel that people not just Americans cannot have joy without sorrow. Without sorrow you cannot grow into a person that can actually understand the meaning of what being happy is.

Works Cited

Eric G. Wilson: Against Happiness; In praise of melancholy

There's Nothing Deep about Depression: Peter D. Kramer

The Art of Happiness: James Poniewozik

Bright Sided: Barbara Ehrenreich