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English 110 H-5

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My grandfather always told me that there are very few things that I can rely on in this world. He never meant for this to sound negative or pessimistic in anyway, instead he simply wanted his grandchildren to be aware of seemingly simple, yet constantly overlooked piece of wisdom that he wished he had respected more. He wanted us to know that change is the only constant in our lives and our society, that if you keep your head down for too long you may look up one day to find that a whole new world and a new life has seamlessly manifested its way into existence. We see it in our society, with technology advancing and cultures conforming to it, but we also see it in our own lives. In what seems like the blink of an eye, we go from a carefree child playing hide and seek with our friends in the park, to an overwhelmed adult playing hide and seek with our never-ending list of responsibility. It was not until recently that I discovered the reason behind my grandfather's somewhat scary piece of cautionary advice. To be aware of our ever changing world, is simply a reminder to never take for granted the few aspects of our lives that are strong enough to persist through the constant storm of change.

Change is so prevalent that it can be difficult to comb out the aspects of life that remain the same and it is even harder to do so when looking at our society through the ages. However, there is one thing that in many ways has remained constant from the beginning of civilization: the human necessity to cook and eat. The idea that cooking is the cornerstone of civilization is echoed in Michael Pollan's article, "Out of the Kitchen, Onto the Couch", in which he describes how learning to cook civilized the human race initially and how traditional cooking habits still

Commented [1]: Great hook!

Commented [2]: This is a great introduction! The hook grabbed my attention and I was engaged throughout it. Your narrative provided a clear message to the readers of exactly why you are writing this essay; as a response to your grandfather's words. You are seeing the bigger picture!

Commented [3]: I really like how you opened the paragraph, it is a good connection to how certain values are changing within the society. Maybe you should introduce what your essay is going to be about a little earlier, so readers who do not know what is going to be talked about has an understanding.

Commented [4]: I would also suggest to introduce some of Pollen here. You also have set up the end of this paragraph for your thesis, maybe add it in here or make the transition more smooth.

Commented [5]: The idea that this essay revolves around the topic of food comes up a little late in the essay. I would like you to give readers a glimpse of what this essay has to offer earlier, maybe tied into the first paragraph with your grandfather's idea. Therefore, the audience will understand the direction this essay is taking sooner in the reading.

have the power to reconnect us to the essence of humanity. Much of these sentiments are also echoed in the series of “Favorite Meal Narratives.” Yet, through his comparison of cooking shows of the past, such as Julia Child’s “The French Chef” to cooking shows of the present, Pollan describes even cooking is being altered in a way that could be further removing us from humanity rather than reconnecting us to it. With the continual change in our lives, most have become accustomed to the ever changing environment, and although the means by which many Americans cook has changed drastically, its place in our lives has been cemented as one aspect that we will not be able to part with due to its long history and greater role in society.

Due to the fast paced environment in which many Americans live, some may say that we have come to accept a life void of routine or moments of greater meaning, which is seldom true. Pollan views America’s treatment of cooking today as just this, a once meaningful and essential moment of our everyday lives that people used to put great care into, that has now been casually overlooked and replaced by quick and easy alternatives that make cooking more convenient and allow us the time to watch cooking shows instead. Pollan describes the increased viewership of cooking shows and states, “What this suggests is that a great many Americans are spending considerably more time watching images of cooking on television that they are cooking themselves – an increasingly archaic activity they will tell you they no longer have time for.”

(Pollan 4) Pollan seems to be suggesting that Americans no longer value the greater meaning and benefits that come from a home-cooked meal. However, Pollan’s claim is opposed by the vast majority of Favorite Meal narratives that describe the continuing traditions and emotions that accompany a home cooked meal. This is true for Megan’s narrative in which she describes her family’s long standing tradition of Sunday dinner at her grandparent’s house that consists of amazing food, but more importantly quality family time. Megan describes the final moments of

Commented [6]: I really like your thesis and the complexity of ideas incorporated into it. I would just like you to reconsider the length of the introduction paragraphs. Would it be more effective to combine them into one paragraph and save the room for the building of your claim? Or do you think that all the background information is necessary for the audience’s understanding and the development of you claim?

Commented [7]: I really like this sentence, but if this is your thesis I would try to make it more specific so it is easier for you to connect your body paragraphs to it.

Commented [8]: This is your thesis? Its very good, just try to chisel it out more and add some contextual evidence.

Commented [9]: This is the perfect opportunity to introduce Julia Child into your claim. She serves as a great example as someone who sees the emotional value invested into cooking. Think about what you mean by “great care” in cooking, as it relates to self care or the care of others.

Commented [10]: Make sure to put the citations inside the quotation marks!

Commented [11]: I like how you connected that narrative into an argument that Pollan was making.

her Sunday dinner by stating, “ We pull around the cul-de-sac driveway as a stuffed and exhausted procession while the pair wave to us from the front steps, watching us all pull away in different directions, knowing we will all be back next Sunday for another meal. “There is nothing I love more than cooking for you all each Sunday. We wouldn’t give up these Sunday dinners for anything,” she said.” (Morrison) Megan’s tradition is one that her family would not trade for any simpler cooking alternative, as Pollan had suggested most Americans are turning to, as her family along with many other American families still value the emotional response and connection to others that is generated through a meal. Despite Pollan’s examination of the increase in cooking show viewership and decrease in cooking itself, it is evident through the favorite meal narratives that Americans still recognize the importance of cooking and are not yet content on allowing this one tradition to change along with other aspects of culture that are continually changing. |

Commented [12]: Maybe find a way to break up this paragraph into two?

Commented [13]: This quote takes up a lot of space on the page. Is there anyway to reduce it without removing the message of the narrative? Maybe the use of ... will be more effective.

Commented [14]: Natalie, I really enjoyed reading your paper. It brought up interesting topics and I liked how you opened it up. I suggest you introduce what you are going to be discussing in your paper earlier, so readers who don't know that will be able to connect what you are saying about your grandfather to the point of the essay. Also, I am assuming that your thesis is the last sentences in your second paragraph. I would make your thesis more clear and specific, it may be easier to connect your body paragraphs to your argument. Your paper is off to a really good start!

Commented [15]: This is very good, however, try to break up the last paragraph and try to make your conclusion paragraph more separated from your body paragraphs.

Commented [16]: Natalie, This piece is well written! There are great text-to-text connections about the opposition between the narrative essays and Pollan's ideas. You definitely have a good handle on the discussion aspect of writing. I would like to see you insert yourself more into the writing, making it more personal rather than analytical. Also, your writing is lengthy which means you might not be able to get all your ideas down in the word limit restraint. Think about combining ideas so you have more space to work with. Overall, awesome job and keep up the good work!