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# ELI STUDENT VOICES

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## **I'm Not a Duck** (First Place)

*Naji AL-Dosary*  
R/W 40

On June 19, 2007, the sun was shining, and the sky was very clear. I decided to take a walk around the campus. At the beginning, I walked down Archer Road, Thirteenth Street, and then University Avenue. Everything was beautiful. Suddenly, the sky was covered with clouds and it was getting dark. When I was walking on Thirty Fourth Street, it rained heavily. I had no umbrella with me. I heard "Oh, Oh, Oh; My hair, my dress, my books." Those sounds were from girls at the bus stop. When I walked under the rain, I was walking the same as a duck, but I was not a duck. When I got to my apartment finally, I was wet all over, but I was very happy and proud of myself. This is what happened on my first day in city of Gainesville.

## **Vegetarianism** (Second Place)

*Guillermo Chiaway*  
R/W 60

### **Abstract**

The current work will show the advantages and disadvantages for people who have chosen to follow a non-meat diet. It will be analyzed in three main topics: consequences in the environment, results in health, and effects in the conscience. When environment and vegetarianism are analyzed, topics such as pollutions, global warming, or water contamination are going to be taken into account so that the readers can have a real idea of what is at risk. Health was considered as a topic to be analyzed because it is probably the main controversial point when talking about vegetarianism. Also, moral issues and humanitarian reason will be analyzed to have a better idea about this style of life. Benefits and drawbacks will be presented so that the readers could get their own conclusion about vegetarianism. Sources for this work have been taken using The University of Florida Online library and the internet.

### **Introduction**

According to the theory of evolution, humankind came from other inferior species such as plants, bugs, and big animals. Since then, human beings have been using animals and plants to feed themselves, and also animals and plants have been utilized to satisfy different necessities such as clothing and housing. However, nowadays, many people think that the current food chain in which animals are part of human beings'

eating habits is not right, and they have decided to keep from eating animals or using them. They argue that animals have feelings because they have a brain and nervous system. Therefore, if they have feelings, they have rights. The rights that they think animals have are the right to live and the right to be treated well.

Other vegetarians are against the way big industries exploit animals and, at the same time, pollute the environment. Air and seas are contaminated by this industry in many ways: tossing waste in the ocean, making the air dirty with smoke, and destroying the eco-system. Many other vegetarians don't eat animals for health reasons. They argue that animal flesh is not good for stopping aging. Some of this kind of vegetarians only eat fish and poultry, and abstain from beef, pork, and other kinds of meat.

On the other hand, we have people that think vegetarianism goes against nature and it breaks the eco-system as well. It facilitates over population of animals, and also might improve the risk of plants disappearance. We also have people that support the idea that vegetarianism is contrary to good eating habits. They appeal that not eating animals could lead to a lack or insufficiency of proteins in the body.

Vegetarianism is controversial. There are opposing viewpoints whatever country people go. It might be seen as positive, neutral or negative. In the current research paper, we will describe what studies say about vegetarianism regarding moral issues, mercy reasons, health matters, and environmental arguments. Finally, conclusions will be shown based on previous findings and research.

### **I. Reasons why a person becomes vegetarian**

#### **a. Mercy reasons**

Many people become vegetarians because they think animals are killed and treated mercilessly. We can find examples of this in many slaughtering methods and the quality of life animals have in farms. Other people decide for vegetarianism arguing that animals have feelings.

First of all, although meat industries are enforced to stun animals before they are killed, they don't fulfill this requirement. We can see many of them butcher animals alive (Warrick, 2001, pp. 8-9). Many companies are not punished because law enforcement is neglecting this issue. For example there are meat companies in which animals get chopped and cut into pieces while they still are blinking, making noise, or moving. It not only happens in big slaughtering houses, but also in smaller ones. "According to Friedlander, a veterinarian and formerly chief government inspector at a Pennsylvania hamburger plant: 'In plants all over the United States, this happens on a daily basis'" (Warrick, 2001, pp. 8-9).

In addition, we also have many avian farms in which hens that lay eggs have a beak cut because they live in small cages where they are not allowed to hurt each other using their beaks. There are many chickens and hens that live in small cages in which the necessary space to develop as living beings is lacking. Many animals are also being genetically manipulated or being implanted with hormones which is an attempt against their rights. People see these things as cruelty against animals and decide not to be part of this, and thus become vegetarians.

Finally, many people are taking away meat from their diets because they think animals have feelings due to the fact that they have a brain. “‘Animals have feelings similar to those of humans,’ said Marc Bekoff, a professor of biology at the University of Colorado” (Friz, 2004). Some animals show feelings when their partners die, some show feelings using facial expression, and some others recognize the difference between games and real fights.

### **b. Environmental problems**

Many people decide for the option of vegetarianism because they are committed to protecting the environment. They argue that meat industries are not beneficial to keep the ecological system in balance. Some arguments that the vegetarian environmentalists sustain are: the exploiting of animals by humans has led to endangerment of species in the world, greenhouse gases are also caused by livestock industries, the erosion and desertification of soil are occasioned by meat companies, and the consumption of large amounts of energy and water is entitled to meat industry (Schwartz, 1996).

Another factor to be considered in the environmental issue is the quantity of manure that the cattle production makes, and how much of it ends up in rivers, lakes, streams, and underground water sources. Some statistics are: 230,000 pounds per second is produced in the United States, 10,000 cattle produce as much waste as a city of 110,000 people. Also, we have to consider the amount of chemical fertilizer and pesticides that are used in raising crops used to feed cattle. These chemical products pollute water, rivers, and oceans when they are dragged by rain. In addition, in order to have more land to develop cattle raising, the meat industry destroys every year millions of acres forest which leads to less plants, and, consequently, more carbon dioxide in the air. In Latin America, more than 25% of forest has disappeared since 1970 because of the meat industry. Another important factor is the reality that cattle grazing is to blame for the erosion and the creation of desert worldwide. Statistics says that one pound of steak is worth 35 pounds of eroded soil in America (Schwartz, 1996).

### **c. Health reasons**

“The American Diet Association states that a well-planned vegetarian diet is healthy and may even prevent certain diseases” (Lankford, 2007) which means that vegetarians, despite the fact that they don’t consume animal protein, are risk-free to get any disease because of their diet. Many vegetarians decide for this style of life because it helps prevents people to get heart diseases, strokes, and cancer. According to the American Diet association “vegetarians have

‘lower rates of death from ischemic heart disease; ... lower blood cholesterol levels, lower blood pressure, and lower rates of hypertension, type 2 diabetes, and prostate and colon cancer’” (Mangel, Messina, Velina, 2003, p.748). Another important issue is that vegetarians are less likely to be obese than meat eaters. Recent studies have shown that meat eaters are nine times more likely to be obese than vegetarians (Robbins, 2001, p. 58.).

## **II. Arguments against vegetarianism**

### **a. Is it healthy?**

Many people consider that being vegetarian is dangerous because vegetarians don’t consume enough proteins that are provided by animals. Although this statement is not entirely true because vegetarians can get proteins from different sources such as beans, soy, or combined rice and beans, it is true that vegetarians must be constantly under surveillance of a nutritionist.

“It is the position of The American Dietetic Association that appropriately planned vegetarian diets are healthful, are nutritionally adequate, and provide health benefits in the prevention and treatment of certain diseases” (Lankford, 2007). In the beginning, it could sound good, but we have to consider the quantity of money that it implies for Americans. Health care is expensive, and to have a nutritionist tracking vegetarian’s eating habit is something to be taken in account at the time a budget is made.

### **b. Morality in meat eaters**

Some vegetarians say that it is immoral to eat meat, and also deplore the way animals are treated. To check if this is true, it is important to go through the three most important religions in the world: Christianity, Islam, and Judaism.

According to the Christian faith, God create human beings to dominate and exploit the earth and all creatures and species there. The only condition is that humans must respect God and other people. According to the Bible: “And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind and with thy whole strength.” This is the first commandment. And the second is like to it: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is no other commandment greater than these” (the Bible Mark 12, 30-31). We can infer that there is no other commandment that talks about animals or animal rights.

Islam states that it is not mandatory for a Muslim to be only vegetarian, they can eat vegetables and also other kinds of meat. They also make a comparison between carnivorous animals and humans, and they conclude that all of them have in common the structure of their teeth which is prepared to eat meat. They infer that, therefore, it is not a mandate of God that humans are not allowed to eat meat.

In the Torah, the sacred book for Jewish people, many animal sacrifices to God are made, so we can imply that animals are treated there as second class beings. Therefore, animals have different rights than humans. It is also stated the prohibition to eat pork; therefore, other animals are allowed to be eaten.

None of the three great religions in the world have mandates about animal's right or prohibitions concerning animal consumption, so we can imply that eating meat is not immoral.

### c. Some ecological drawbacks

Recent studies have demonstrated that cows are to blame at the time we are considering factors that pollute the environment or destroy the eco-system. According to The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, "the livestock sector emerges as one of the top two or three most significant contributors to the most serious environmental problems, at every scale from local to global" ("Global Warming Culprits: Cars and ... Cows", 2006). When cows ruminate, they give away methane which is a component that contributes mostly in trapping heat. Cows also give off nitrous oxide and ammonia when they defecate. It means that the consumption of animals is important to balance the eco-system. Otherwise, if cows are not consumed, there will be an over-population of cows, and, thus, an increase in problems such as global warming, land depletion, climate change, air pollution, and water pollution.

### Conclusions

Although many diet institutions state that vegetarianism is viable, they also say that vegetarians should be tracked by a dietician to let them have healthy eating habits. This is an important point to be taken into account at the time people decide to be vegetarians because they need to calculate how much money they are going to spend in hiring nutritionists for advice. Decisions to become vegetarian should be made responsibly; otherwise consequence could lead to a poor quality of life rather than a good one.

The ecosystem has an order in which some animals are vegetarians and some others are carnivorous, and human beings, as long as they don't follow instinct but reason and willpower can be in either category. They can choose whatever things are the best for their beliefs and their health. Also, it is important to notice that there aren't any moral prohibitions or encouragements for people to choose between being a vegetarian or a carnivore.

Society should warn the meat industry about all the environmental pollution that its industries are causing to the planet at the time they are raising cattle. Laws of compensation for this industry for all contamination it is occasioning should be enacted. They should be obligated to plant new trees, to clean water, or to pay extra taxes for environment repairation.

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## Korean College Entrance: Sweet after Bitter

*Il-Seung Kim (Kevin)*

*R/W 40*

"Sweet after bitter": It is the perfect expression that explains what I went through when I tried to enter my university. There is a test in Korea which is the national scholastic achievement examination for the college entrance called Soo-neung, which is like the SAT. However, the power of influence of the exam is absolute, so it is almost all that is needed to enter a university in Korea. Even though there are other criteria for the college entrance, those kinds of things don't affect the entrance as much as the exam, so every senior in high school and anyone who wants to enter the university has to take this exam. The exam is taken once per year, so even if someone got a lower score than what he/she expected and failed to enter the college, there is no choice but just to wait until next year's exam. The exam is composed of 4 parts: Korean, mathematics, science and a subject of society including history, economics, ethics, etc, and English. The form of the question is a multiple choice method that examinees can choose one of 5 answers. The answer sheet, separated from the test paper, is the form of OMR card. It means once an examinee filled the wrong answer in the answer sheet, he/she can't fix it, unless he/she changes the sheet. In 2003, when I was a high school senior, I took the test. To mention the result first, I failed to enter the college the first time because of the exam. When I took the English part of the exam, something happened. After I solved the last question at the English part, and when I was just about to check my answer sheet, I realized that all the blanks for the answers were already filled. To make matters worse, time was

up when I found my fault. Because of my mistake in answering, I got an awful score which couldn't be accepted by the university I wanted to go to. I, finally, failed to enter a university that year. To look back on that time, there are some reasons for the result. I was too nervous to take the exam, and that made me careless. Because of my carelessness, I mucked up the whole exam. The other problem was a lack of knowledge of the test. Even if time was up, I could have asked the proctor for extra time to rewrite my answer sheet; however, I didn't. When I knew this result, I didn't want to believe the reality, and it made me feel frustrated. I always felt blue as if I ruined my whole life. However, I tried my best to get ready to take the exam once more since I realized that things already happened and never could I return to that time. As a result, when I took the exam again, I got a high enough score to be admitted into the university that I wanted to go to. Of course, I had a hard time, but I overcame it, and I was finally stronger than before, like "Sweet after bitter".

## **Learning in the Classroom VS Long Distance Learning**

*Raeda Alkhars*

*R/W 50*

Having an effective education and learning process are something that has always been very significant to any ardent teacher or educator who is looking for creative teaching and learning output. Since the beginning of dreaming and looking for achieving the goal of creative and successful learning progress, the teacher and the students honed their best to chose the best teaching and learning approach that satisfy their learning needs.

There are some opponents who advocate the great effects and advantages of long distance learning. They believe that long distance learning provides the flexibility for the students to learn without the limitation of specific time and place. Moreover, they believe that long distance learning supports the learners more by allowing them to work and study in the same time. On the other hand, there are other opponents who are speaking in favor of the critical role of learning in the classroom. They emphasis on how being in contact with the teacher and other students helps a lot in making a difference or more distinctive changes for tomorrow's education.

According to the long distance learning opponents, learning on line doesn't require strict time, place and study plan. Students can log on and create their schedules according to their time and learning needs. Although long distance learning sounds more flexible in time and place, it lacks the warm touch from a teacher who always roams in class looking for a student who needs help. In other words, with long distance learning the teacher and the students miss the passionate feeling moments during the educational learning process. For example, while the students are doing the learning activities on line, both the teacher and the students miss the fervent moment of eye contact, smiling or saying, "Yes we understand it."

Next, the same opponents strongly believe in the convenient validity of working and studying at the same time.

They appreciate the advantage of reducing the pressure on the parents' or the students' educational financial budget by approaching long distance learning. For instance, they think that working while studying on line adds a lot to the students' experiences and encourages them to be more independent. Therefore, the students may practice the taught information by working a part time job in the same field of their studying. According to some educators in administrations, the best way to teach the students how to manage is involving the students in tasks and small jobs that allow them to manage.

The other opponents encourage inspiring the students to achieve and target their learning objectives by learning in the classroom. The most important reason for advocating teaching the students in the class is that most of the teachers love to work with students in real physical teaching and learning contexts such as in the classroom. For some teachers, it is hard to imagine teaching without being around the students in the classroom. In the class, student and teacher will not miss the magic of studying and learning at the same time during the teaching, learning and communication processes. Usually, there are fun and great learning tasks to do. In the classroom, during the learning and teaching activities, both the teacher and the students will face and learn something unknown every day. Every day, each student comes to class with a lot of happiness and excitement. Students always ask questions; create extra tasks by looking for more clarifying for the misunderstood information.

In the classroom learning, the teacher's desire of always being willing to provide a warm hand or a help to students when they need could be satisfied. The compassionate teacher who looks for supporting and satisfying the students' learning needs by offering educational help any time they need. In the classroom learning method, the teacher can watch and encourage the students to learn independently. For example, the teacher can manage the class by using methods that allow the students to talk; express their selves, share opinions with each other and ask for help when they need. Moreover, the teacher can adapt the curriculum and syllabus by using any effective teaching approach or method that helps the students' educational process.

To conclude, I believe that being able to educate the students effectively in a classroom, satisfying their learning needs and helping them to learn more when they need, are the most important goals and the best reward to target during the teaching and learning process. I agree with the people who advocate learning in the classroom provides more communicative teaching and learning environments. Finally, learning in the classroom never ends when the students and the teacher try to achieve their potentials by learning and teaching something new every day.

## **It's School, Not a Fashion Show**

*Maria Dantas*

*R/W 60*

School uniform is being considered a positive solution to reduce discipline problems and increase school safety.

Helping students concentrate on their work, preventing gang members from wearing clothes with certain language and colors, preventing discrimination and eliminating brand pressure are some of the benefits of school uniforms. As a result, many public schools, in many states in America, are adopting a uniform as a dress code.

Uniforms will save students' and teachers' time. Consequently, the learning environment will be enhanced. Instead of students worrying about being in style the next day or worrying about who is wearing expensive clothes or gang clothes, they can concentrate more on their activities. In addition, school uniforms make it much easier for the students to get ready in the morning because it is less stressing to find something to wear every day. Also, teachers and school employees will have more time to plan their activities instead of acting as a fashion police, according to "In a similar . . .," 2004, par 10; "School fashion police," 2003, par 3," in a [Gainesville Sun](#) article.

Another good reason to adopt school uniforms is to avoid clothing competition among students. Some students just can't afford wearing expensive clothes and they feel discriminated against because of that. It would be easier to interact socially with the other students if they all look equal, so "students don't get lumped into groups according to style or financial means," said a **Rock School** student to the [Gainesville Sun](#). In addition, school uniforms are in the long run a bargain compared to stylish clothing. Some people can't afford buying new clothes every other day for their children. Therefore, the pressure to buy expensive and trendy kids' clothing and shoes is not there when they wear uniforms. As a school director and a mother, I can see that my 15-year-old daughter spends more time focused on her clothes than on her homework, whereas when she has studied in a school in which a uniform was required, she would spend more time worried about her activities and homework. Also, the school uniform policy will stop the poor children being picked on if all children have to wear the same thing to school.

Likewise, wearing a school uniform decreases levels of violence in American Schools. Violence and theft or even threatening situations can be avoided if the students stop wearing designer clothing or expensive sneakers. For instance, children have been violently injured by other children because some of them envy other children's clothing and they lack financial resources to buy similar styles. I have seen students really sad and not motivated to go to school for not having the "appropriate" clothes. Being in somebody else's shoes makes easier to understand how he feels. How **would you** feel if you were a kid and couldn't afford stylish clothing to go to school? Also, if all the students wear uniforms, it will be easier for school staff to recognize intruders who come to school.

Even though some students from **Santa Fe High School** think that School uniforms will "limit their freedom of expression," students could still express themselves by wearing a button or an armband. The students, who sincerely held religious beliefs, could wear a uniform and cover their heads with the same fabric that is made the shirts, so they would not be so different from the other ones. Dustin Bungart, a freshman from **The Rock School** in Gainesville stated that "uniform

restrict you from being independent" (2004, par.8). But they are becoming too independent and they are violating their classmates' right of freedom. I have been to **Gainesville High School** several times and I have noticed that there is no dress code there. Most of the girls wear high heels, mini-skirts, short shorts and their hair is too stylish. Certainly, they spend a lot of time dressing up. Most of the boys wear boxer shorts hanging out. Also, they like baggy pants, caps, bandanas and other head coverings and they have black nail polish. But what really called my attention were all those pierces, tattoos, spiked hair everywhere in that school. It's really beyond the limits because students have turned school into an unending fashion show.

As a school director, I've noticed that parents nowadays are too busy to be aware of what their kids wear to school. Since today's parents don't spend as much time with their kids as parents used to do in the past, they should support the school's position in the enforcement of the policy and ensure their child understands why uniforms are worn.

Unfortunately, clothing influences the way students see themselves. That's why uniforms should be adopted. Despite the fact that students think that uniforms are frumpish, uncomfortable, limit their freedom of expression, restrict them from being independent, we must prioritize a safe and a secure environment for all the pupils. What really matters is the student's well-being. We have to enforce the students' right of being safe in school.

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### Advice for New Students (modal practice)

*Naji AL-Dosary*  
*Grammar 31*

Our semester begins today, so there are many students in the ELI hallway. Excuse me, friends. You are new ELI students, right? Do you mind if I give you some advice? Thanks. This is the first day. So, you should meet Mr. Scott in the main office. You had better take the orientation test. You had better not forget your insurance and immunization documents. You should give your address to Mr. Scott in the main office. When you come to your classes, you had better be on time. You had better not speak your native language in the ELI hallway or in class. You ought to do your homework and prepare for your tests. You ought to watch more movies to improve your English. You should always read newspapers or books in English to improve your reading skills. You ought to read the ELI Weekly. You had better respect your teacher and your classmates. You'd better attend the final exam.

Finally, you shouldn't forget the commencement ceremony on the last day of the semester.

Good luck, new students! You are going to love it here!

### **Some Advice for New Students** (modal practice)

*Elif Topsakal*

*Grammar 31*

I am a Turkish student who has just finished my first semester at ELI. I had really enjoyable times while I was here. I had a chance to meet a lot of people from different countries and cultures. This was really exciting. And I learned a lot of things. I believe that I improved a lot my English. To have a fun and to be successful during the course you should follow the advice that I will give you.

First of all, it is not important what your level is. The important thing is the level to which you want to go. For this you should attend the course everyday regularly. You should listen to your teacher carefully. Maybe at first you will not understand anything, but after a little time you will be aware of change about that. You had better do homework on time. It is really important to learn. Every time you ought to be active in class and you should ask everything that you did not understand. You should not be shy. Teachers are really understanding about that.

My second advice is if you would like to improve your English, you should make a lot of friends both international and American. Every time you should speak English. Maybe you will have friends from your own country, but you had better not speak with your own language with them. This is not beneficial for your English. Because you are in America, you should consider that. A lot of activities will be at ELI. You ought to join all of the activities. You can have really enjoyable times.

This is some advice for you. If you consider this, it will help you to have a productive and enjoyable time in America at the ELI.

### **Advice for New Students** (modal practice)

*Jeonghee Lee*

*Grammar 31*

Hi new students. Welcome to the ELI. I'm glad to see you. I would like to give you three pieces of advice.

First, you should study hard. I believe that you want to improve your English skills. If you study hard, you can achieve your goal.

Second, you ought to participate in activities. There are various kinds of activities at the ELI and UF.

Third, you'd better not drink and drive or there will be serious consequences. There are many arrests and alcohol-related crashes.

I hope that you will have a great time with the ELI in the US.

### **Studying at the ELI**

*Serpil Rakap*

*Grammar 31*

I recommend studying at the ELI to anyone interested in improving their English. This is the best place to learn and improve your English. You get to know and have fun with a lot of international people in the ELI who are in the same situation as you. It's a great thing to be in the ELI. Some of the people I met at the ELI have become my best friends. The ELI's staff has prepared everything for the students. They are so knowledgeable and professional that they are truly excellent guides for people who just come to the US. Before I attended the ELI, I used to be a little bit shy. Now I am more outgoing and my English has dramatically improved. Now I'm comfortable interacting with people and I'm more confident. My pronunciation has greatly improved.

I couldn't find a better place to learn English than the ELI and I am sure you won't find one, either. Trust me!

### **How to Memorize GRE Vocabulary**

*Bruna B. Cavalcanti*

*Grammar for Writing*

Many students who need to take the GRE exam should be aware that there are some steps they can take if they need to memorize a lot of vocabulary words. Some of those students don't know the right way to memorize the GRE vocabulary and they just try to memorize them randomly or repeating the words in a completely wrong way. If you are one of those students and don't know the right way to memorize the GRE vocabulary, you'll fail and get a bad score on your GRE exam. The best way to memorize GRE vocabulary is to follow the following steps: collecting materials, studying the materials, and reviewing the vocabulary.

The first step to memorize GRE vocabulary is collecting materials to study. To get a good score, you have to memorize the vocabulary of good and updated materials. Before buying any book, talk to some friends who have gotten a good score on the GRE recently, then, ask them which book they used to study the vocabulary words. After that, go to some library and search for those books and get them. You can also go online, research for the best seller and purchase it. Next, you should go to some bookstore or go to an online store and purchase some audio books. If you have an Ipod or mp3, you'll be able to learn vocabulary words from everywhere. After collecting all of those materials you are ready to go to the second step.

The second step is studying those materials you have collected before. Start studying the GRE high frequency words, and then go to the master word list. Take about 8 words to learn per day. Then, write down the definition of the vocabulary words and understand them. After that, write sentences using those vocabularies to better understand and remember easily on the exam. While you learn vocabulary words from the books, you can also learn from your computer using the audio book

that you got in the first step. Get the audio book cd and download to your computer; after that you can download the audio book from your computer to your ipod or mp3 player. Listen to the audio book as much as you can. Listening to the audio book, you can learn the vocabulary words while you are driving, exercising and shopping. After you learn a great number of words, you are ready to go to the third step.

The third step is reviewing the vocabulary words. This step is mostly to make sure you know the vocabulary words you have studied in the second step. Now, get the list of the vocabulary you have studied before, then, review all of the words and make sure you know them. If there is some word that you don't remember the definition, go back to the second step and do it again with those words that you don't remember. Try to use those vocabulary words in your conversations and emails with your friends. After reviewing the definitions start playing games with the vocabulary words and taking quizzes and online tests to help you to improve even more.

Students who don't follow those steps to memorize the GRE vocabulary don't know how much time they are wasting. Each step is important to help students memorizing as much vocabulary is possible in an organized and correct way. If you follow those steps listed above, you'll memorize the GRE vocabulary more efficiently and faster.

## Global Warming

*Jongsung Kim*

*R/W 50*

It is not too difficult to hear the words 'Global Warming', and also easily hear the causes such as burning fossil fuels, cutting trees. Some people are worried about effects of global warming and some people are not. Then what is global warming? Simply, global warming is a situation in which the temperature of the Earth has been increasing. Moreover, it is changing the climate and it is threatening our life.

Global warming is a kind of broken mass-balance situation. If the amount of radiation from the Sun to the Earth is 100, the amount of the radiation from the Earth to the outer space must be 100. This is a perfect mass-balance. However, for many reasons, the Earth's atmosphere traps more and more radiation from the Earth, and this trapped energy makes the Earth warmer. For example, solar radiation to the earth is 100, but the earth radiation to the outer space is 95. Then left-over five make the earth warmer. Like this, the amount of left-over energy is increasing now, and eventually the earth gets warmer and warmer. This is called 'the Greenhouse effect'.

What makes the greenhouse effect? I think many people, especially in industrialized countries, might experience cold temperatures in the summer. It is hot in the summer, but if you enter buildings or houses, you can experience totally different temperature conditions; it is too cold. Some buildings use too much energy to create a comfortable condition to work or study in. For example, it is one of my bad memories; it was the very first day of school in Japan. It was summer so I did not wear long sleeves, but it was a mistake. The classroom was too cold to study; they dropped the temperature 18 or 19 degrees

Celsius. I couldn't stand the cold during the class. After that day I knew that I had to bring extra clothes; when I went anywhere in Japan. It is same in the U.S.A. Of course, there are also opposite situations; some people wear half sleeves in winter because they set the heater temperature too high. Why do people wear extra clothing in summer and wear half sleeves in winter? Clearly it is a waste of energy. We use too much energy, unnecessary energy. It is not only a waste of resources but also a big reason for global warming. We use an amount of fossil fuels or other resources to make these energies, and it releases more carbon dioxide. This released carbon dioxide is the most important part of the greenhouse effect. It goes to the atmosphere and traps the radiation from the Earth, and makes the Earth warmer.

We also know the importance of trees. The process of photosynthesis of trees is very important to our life. Photosynthesis is a process in which green plants use carbon dioxide to produce energy, and here, oxygen, which is an essential element to sustaining people, animal, plants, and other living things, is produced. Trees can remove carbon dioxide, but the problem is that many countries cut down the trees to use as fuels, for making houses, or paper. Cutting trees affects the carbon dioxide removal rate, and it accelerates global warming.

With the result of global warming, we need international action. The Kyoto protocol was one of the most important negotiations for action. In December 1997, from countries all over the world, delegates gathered to make a framework to prevent global warming. The key point was to aid from rich countries to poor to support the transfer of carbon-saving technology (Crook, 2008). However, the countries questioned some part of the negotiation such as the reduction ratio of carbon dioxide. Australia was allowed an 8 percent increase of carbon dioxide but Canada was required to reduce by 6 percent (Crook, 2008). Also, the countries wanted to make profit so they didn't follow the negotiations. As a result, the Kyoto protocol failed to prevent global warming. Everyone knows that we need some strong rules to prevent global warming but they aren't willing to follow them if there is any economic loss. This is one of the reasons why global warming keeps going. Human life itself is endangered unless threats associated with global warming are taken seriously (Toussaint, 2008).

Because of global warming, the climate has also dramatically changed. The average temperature of the Earth has increased around one degree Celsius. It has caused a lot of unusual weather events such as Hurricane Katrina, severe cold weather in Europe, and floods in Asia. Soil loses stability in severe weather conditions, and it accelerates erosion of the soil. Then particles which are moved by erosion block a path of surface water. It means a decrease in water adsorption rate of the soil. Therefore, these unusual weather conditions contribute to the desertification. Furthermore, yellow sand, the tiny sands blown by wind from the desert, cause the air pollutant. The worse things are PM 10 or PM 5 problems in the yellow sand. PM 10 and PM 5 are an index that measure air pollutant materials. Sand is not harmful to people but it contains many heavy metals or poisons. If the size of the materials is smaller than 10 or 5 micrometers, the materials can go into the throat or

lungs of human beings. It is harmful and dangerous not only to kids but also to adults. These all are the results of global warming that was made by people.

Our desires for a more convenient life have caused global warming and it is threatening our lives. The only way to solve this problem is action by all people. All individuals have to keep in mind the truth that global warming was caused by people and act to save energy, and protect the Earth's environment.

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## School Uniform

*Ai Nishikawa*  
*R/W 60*

Uniforms make life easier for students because they do not have to think about what to wear. In Japan, almost all high schools require students to wear uniforms. This is a controversial topic any time. There are many countries that require uniforms which include Britain, Australia, Ireland, New Zealand, Singapore, Hong Kong, South Africa and many other African countries. In other countries, particularly in continental Europe, the USA and Canada, they do not require uniforms of the students except some private schools. In the United States, some schools are adopting a uniform policy. However, uniforms are not necessary for students.

Some people think that school uniforms create a sense of belonging to a community. Students have school pride because their uniforms represent the school to which they belong. However, school uniforms quash students' individualism. Making students the same is dangerous because teachers tend to ignore students' individuality. A school is the place where teachers should respect students' personality. Also, school should be a place where students learn accepting of different people and their abilities.

In addition, my opponents mention that schools with uniforms show better educational consequences because uniforms help student discipline and their academic ability improves easier. Students are more likely to concentrate on their study without observation from other people and watching other outfits; however, those assumptions rely on weak evidence. There is no difference in academic ability between students who wear uniforms and students who do not. Moreover, students who have a rebellious spirit are more likely to break rules if there are strict rules.

Finally, students in uniforms are easily identified. People state that uniforms help schools be safer because people will notice intruders who do not wear uniforms. Also, ordinary people will report students' attitude in public spaces if they become delinquent. On the other hand, there is no proper research that shows uniforms in school reduce crime; on the

contrary, uniforms lead students to more violence because of fights and bullying between students from rival schools. Uniforms make students not only notice other schools but also identify the rank of school. People judge students' value without their ability when they just see their uniform which the rank of school is high or low.

In sum, as the examples show, uniforms are not necessary for students regarding educational value, academic ability, and safety in school. Students have a right to express their individuality and uniforms are not involved with their academic ability. Uniforms give a violent influence to students. While it is true uniforms make a students' life easier, it is not necessary to affect academic success.

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## The Art of Quilting

*Esperanza Rebollo*  
*R/W 3*

Many years ago I went to an arts and crafts festival in Spain and there were many artisans that offered their merchandise. Some of them had workshops at their tables and I saw a woman who was quilting a nice cover. I took the workshop and I began to love this old technique of sewing small pieces of fabric. I began to buy different fabrics when I was traveling, not thinking about a new project, just to keep them for a future use. The art of quilting is not only to sew small pieces of fabric; it also represents dreams and memories.

The most common type for a quilt top is made with different blocks that are square pieces of fabric. These pieces can be identical or different. Anyone can choose the color that we like for every design and also we can choose what to use it for.

Quilting had become an established American tradition by the middle of the nineteenth century. We have different periods in this art.

1776-1820--Early America—most of them were made by hand and the fabrics were imported from England and France.

1830-1850—Going West—In 1840 the invention of the sewing machine revolutionized the craft. In this period the block method of quilting was born, and we have some names of blocks like Bear's Paw, Schoolhouse, Log Cabin that remind us of the daily experiences.

1861-1865—Quilted Comfort—During the Civil War, many quilts were made but only a few survive.



1876-1900—The Gilded Age—Quilting in America dropped at least in the big cities where you could buy cheaper quilts in department stores.

1914-1924—America after the War & The Twenties—This art was increased in Amish communities and their quilts are influenced by the Victorian era.

1930-1945—The Great Depression & America at War Again—Women began to quilt for necessity.

I used to spend hours at night quilting and sewing the fabric. I have already done several covers and cushions and I used to present different pieces to my friends. When I was applying to the ELI I thought that it would be an opportunity for me to improve my quilting skills, and fortunately I found a very nice, patient, and friendly woman whose name is Valerie Malkemes. She is now helping me to discover a new world of this fabulous art.

## **Travelers and Tourists in Saudi Arabia**

*Abdulla Alghunaim*

*R/W 41*

Saudi Arabia attracts the most travelers and tourists in the Middle East and the Gulf area. There are several reasons that Saudi Arabia attracts travelers and tourists, such as oil and the two holy mosques. There are, however, some advantages and disadvantages of attracting people to Saudi Arabia, such as learning from other cultures and suffering from immigration issues.

Saudi Arabia is an attractive country for business travelers and religious tourists. Owing to the oil in Saudi Arabia, most of people who come to Saudi Arabia from abroad have business purposes. One of the foremost reasons for travelers to come to Saudi Arabia is the several huge companies that work there; such as ARAMCO and SABIC. These companies have some workers from different countries, and deal with some foreign companies as well. Their operations in Saudi Arabia attract a lot of business travelers to visit Saudi Arabia. Other than doing business, some travelers visit the country for religious reasons. Both the holy mosques in Mecca and Medina attract a huge number of travelers yearly. These travelers come usually to pray and spend some time in these two mosques. However, Saudi Arabia attracts some tourists as well. Although it doesn't have very attractive natural views and most of its parts are desert, in some areas it does have some green land and lovely weather. Abha, which has a green mountain and a very nice weather in summer, attracts a remarkable number of tourists yearly. Most of them are from the Gulf area.

Some of the travelers who come to Saudi Arabia have a positive impact on the country. For example, most foreigners who come to the country for business purposes speak different languages and have different cultures. That allows Saudis to learn some of these languages such as English, and they learn about these cultures such as the American one. That exposure gives them the opportunity to be open for the rest of the world. However, some travelers have a negative impact on the country. Most of these travelers are not in the country for business.

Because Islam is a widespread religion and the two holy mosques represent it, they attract yearly different people from different countries and different background. Some of them are rich and some others are poor. Some of them are educated and some others not. Having these different types of people in one-place creates some bad influence sometimes. The Saudi government works hard to restrict the rules of visiting the country to make sure people who come to visit Saudi Arabia for religious purposes leave the country as soon as they complete their pilgrimages.

One main bad influence which has been affecting Saudi Arabia since the beginning of establishing the country is immigration. Because the two holy mosques are wanted destinations for Muslims around the world and because Saudi Arabia is a very rich country, a lot of poor Muslims want to immigrate to Saudi Arabia, which draws a bad picture about the people of Saudi Arabia sometimes. Since Saudi Arabia has been affected by this, the poverty in Saudi Arabia started to exist. Nowadays, Saudi Arabia is working on both fighting the illegal immigrant and the poorness in the country.

Although there are some disadvantages of Saudi Arabia being an attractive country, the advantages are more. The government of Saudi Arabia is trying to welcome everybody to the country but in a legal way. Saudi Arabia is a destination for many types of people for very different purposes.

## **An Important Accident in My Life**

*Byoungyoul Kim (Pascal)*

*R/W 20*

A significant event in my life was my father's death. This is because it changed my life completely. When I was in the marines, my father died accidentally. He drank too much and he wanted to sleep. He was on his way to his room, but he stumbled to the sofa. At this time, my father was fine, so he continued to his room, and he fell asleep. Suddenly, after just ten minutes, he stopped breathing. Unfortunately, no one knew about this situation. After a little time, my brother found my father, but it was too late. My father had died.

Mysteriously, my father never called me (when I was in the marines) before the accident. However, on that day, my father called me, and he and I talked about many things. Thirty minutes after that call, my brother called me. He said, "Father is dead!" I didn't believe that. A Korean proverb says, "When a person comes to die, they know that, so they will call someone to yearn." I didn't believe this proverb at first, but now I believe it.

I didn't go to my father's funeral because I was on an island. The weather was very terrible, so all the ships were docked for five days. Therefore, I only arrived home after his funeral. I didn't feel his death until now. At that time, I changed my life, my thinking and my habits. For example, I thought about some problems, and I thought for a long time and deeply, because I didn't like to listen to people saying, "You don't have father." I also liked to drink too much, but now I can control myself. I also try to do housework (e.g., to fix

things). Four years ago, I thought only about myself, but now I think about my family and other people as well.

Finally, my father's death has been a significant factor in my life. It forced me to grow up, maybe before I was ready.

## **Tourism in Venezuela**

*Mariana Villasmil*

*R/W 41*

Venezuela is a beautiful country located in South America. It was discovered by Christopher Columbus in 1498 who called this country "Venezuela" in honor of the beautiful city of Venecia. Since its discovery, Venezuela has received people from different places of the world such as Europe, Africa, and Asia. It is a country with beautiful people, places, and with very valuable natural resources. Because of its beautiful beaches, the Amazon and desert, Venezuela is an amazing country where both tourist and travelers come every year to enjoy. These visitors have both a positive and bad impact on the country and its people.

People like to visit Venezuela because it is a country with various attractions like beaches, the Amazon and desert. "El Yuque" beach, the national park "Canaima" and the national park "Los Medanos de Coro" are three of the most visited attractions in Venezuela. "El Yuque" beach on Margarita Island is famous and much visited because it has the most beautiful sunsets in Venezuela. Also, it is one of the five top in the world for windsurfing. Many visitors go to "Canaima" national park in the Amazon to see the highest waterfall of the world, which is "El Salto El Angel", and because it's the biggest national park in the world. "Los Medanos de Coro" is also one of the three most visited places because it is the unique mini desert in South America. During the day, the dunes move from one side to another side with the wind offering a beautiful show. These places make Venezuela an exciting country to visit.

Tourism in Venezuela attracts two main groups of people. The first group, travelers, who came to the country without a schedule and with a small amount of money. The second group, tourists that come with specific attractions to visit and very much money. Travelers go to Venezuela to have adventure and they like to know places by themselves or through normal locals. They don't need special guides or arranged tours. These visitors are more interested in local customs and cultures than places or attractions. They don't need a lot of money to know the country because they just go to the street and eat "arepas" or "cachapas," which are traditional Venezuelan food, and this food doesn't cost more than five dollars. Also, they stay in motels beside the way with just basic facilities that don't cost more than fifty dollars per night. On the other hand, tourists stay in luxury hotels with spas, golf courses, luxury facilities, and room service at any time, and they spend at least \$300 per night. Tourists just visit attractions that come with a guide, they don't go to places that require risk or that are not arranged tours. Also, tourists spend a lot of money on food because they eat in restaurants with exclusive chefs, reservations, fine cuisine with fine ingredients where each plate

can cost fifty dollars. Both travelers and tourists come to the country and know it but in different ways.

As in many countries, visitors come and have good impact on the country, but some visitors bring bad behaviors that have bad impact on the country and its people. Tourist and travelers have a good economic impact in the country. Whether they spend a lot of money or not, that money increases the budget of the country. According to a government's graph, in 2005 Venezuela's budget received \$250 million from tourism. The importance of cleaning is a good behavior that most of visitors bring with them. They don't throw garbage in beaches, rivers, and other natural attractions so this behavior makes an impact on the locals motivating them to imitate this behavior and keep the natural places in excellent condition. Though most tourists have good impacts, some visitors in the last years come to Venezuela and pay young women to have a kind of sexual entertainment because they say "it is fun." Most of these visitors come from Europe. This behavior causes an effect of low self-esteem in locals because they think they are objects for sale and not human beings. Also, some people come to the country like tourists and then they took children under the law from poor families and pay a lot of money to these families for their children. This behavior motivates locals to forget their morals, and they are worried just about foreign money. Tourism could be good or bad for Venezuela, especially for its people.

Venezuela, with its interesting attractions like the Amazon, beaches, and desert, is a beautiful country to visit. Visitors can be travelers or tourists and they are going to enjoy this country. Their visit always will have good or bad impacts on Venezuela's people. To travel around the world and know new people, customs, and cultures is an amazing experience, and to travel to a country where you can find anything you imagine, like Venezuela, is amazing.

## **Globalization**

*Ana Paula Diaz*

*R/W 3*

When you talk about something, you always have to introduce the meaning of your topic, in this case globalization. After I looked in different books and web pages, I am able to make my own definition: Globalization is an inevitable phenomenon that has been bringing the world closer and dropping borders. Globalization also implies a big tendency where everybody is in. Aspects like economy, politics, education, society, culture and the particular behavior of many influential people are in the same line, thinking about the same things. Economic interdependence and interaction between countries are becoming stronger. Nowadays all countries take an important part in this process, but the real problem is how countries assume this phenomenon. In many cases, this phenomenon destabilizes many of those poor countries.

I do not agree with people who criticize effects of globalization, because they always talk about economics aspects and many times they forget positive things. One thing that is really true is how the process has exploited people in

emergent countries, so now they do not have many benefits, for example, countries in Africa or South America who are the most vulnerable to the negative impact of globalization. If we compare those countries with others like China or Uganda, the differences are bigger. They have advantages in money, technology, and human resources so when we have to make a trade or some kind of business, they always said what to do.

Here are some statistics about those who receive the greatest benefits from globalization.

Globalization:

- China: Reform led to the largest poverty reduction in history. The number of rural poor fell from 250 million in 1978 to 34 million in 1999
- Uganda: Poverty fell 40% during the 1990s and school enrollments doubled

(<http://youthink.worldbank.org/issues/globalization/>)

Another example about positive things from the globalization is what we are living here, in the ELI. I think we are in a small world, sharing different cultures and learning a lot about other countries and this is only for one reason, globalization.

After I analyzed all aspects about this point, my conclusion is: This phenomenon is here, is inevitable, but we can do many things to affect it. One of them is to give some advice and help to those poor countries about globalization; we have to begin doing better things in our homes, in our schools and in our society. We have to protect our environment and develop our technologies to obtain the great benefits in our country.

Finally, I want to share interesting things that I have found about what to do if you live in a developing country and if you live in a developed country.

If you live in a developing country

- Study to help your society
- Volunteer to help those in need
- Encourage people to give a hand to those who need it
- Learn how much money your government receives in development assistance and take action about this

If you live in a developed country

- Volunteer to help those in need
  - Encourage others to study to help their society
  - Work together, so our world can become a better place
- (<http://youthink.worldbank.org/issues/globalization/>)

## **Always Remember; Don't Forget**

*Ricardo Prati*

*R/W 50*

Sometimes you don't appreciate the things that you have until you lose them, and that's what happened to me with my grandparents. When I had them I didn't pay attention to them, but when I lost them I realized how bad I had been, which changed my life so much. With the loss of my grandparents, I started to see life in a better way by loving more, remembering, and taking care of the people who are important to me.

Nowadays I feel more love and care for the people that are important to me. I try to help them in whatever I can, as much as I can. For example I try to help my mom in whatever she needs, if she asks me to go to somewhere I go, if she tells me to cook I go and cook. These are little things I do that make a big difference in the love of my family.

I like to remember people like my grandparents with my best memories of them; I like to remember moments such as, when we used to sit and talk about anything, when my grandfather would dance with my aunts and with my mother, or when my grandma would tell my cousins and me not to make too much trouble, or they would punish us it. Those are moments that I like to remember, and that have taught me, and make me the person that I am right now.

Now that I'm a more considerate person, I take care of the people that are important to me. When someone in my family is sick I always go and see if they need any help, or they need something. When someone close to me, has a problem, and wants to tell someone everything, I'm there for them. I do all this stuff because they are people that I trust, people that I care about, and people that are important in my life.

Sometimes life has many changes and has many turns, and in those moments you have to stay strong. Never forget why you are like this and who the people that make you like this are, the people who really care about you. Instead of forgetting those people, you have to love them more.

## **Three Faces of Tourism in Brazil**

*Annelena Porto Delgado*

*R/W 41*

Being one of the four largest places for tourism on the America continent, Brazil is rich in options of accommodations, and you can have a good time with the locals. If your choice is an inexpensive trip, and you have only a little amount of money to travel, there are many options of food and lodging in Brazil, and they can be chosen according to your budget for the trip. Although tourism impacts Brazil positively, some negative things can happen, too. On the positive side, visitors leave a lot of money in the country, and they make some investments in social causes. Increasing violence and sex exploitation in the country, tourism can impact negatively the Brazilian society too. Adapting their products to visitors' demands, artists make changes in the design of their products. This causes loss in the characteristics and culture value.

The fourth largest tourist destination on the America continent, Brazil receives a huge number of people from all parts of the world per year. There are two expressions which define people who travel, "travelers" or "tourists". Although travelers don't have large amounts of money to travel, tourists bring and spend a lot of money in the places that are visited. Bringing large amounts of money, tourists are frequently found in Brazil. Travelers look for cheaper accommodations such as hostels, or locals' houses charging low costs. They eat in individual food vendors in the streets or in the informal restaurants at the locals' houses. However, tourists search for comfortable accommodations in big hotels, and they look for

famous restaurants with renowned chefs, it does not matter the cost for them.

Having beautiful beaches and many options in beautiful natural places for ecotourism, Brazil attracts a huge number of tourists to these beautiful beaches, forests, and falls. Having prepared their employees, the big hotels are ready to receive foreign people. Chambermaids, waiters, receptionists, and managers in far-reaching hotels or resorts in Brazil speak English to communicate with their guests. Spending a lot of money in the country, tourists leave around US\$ 2.3 billion in the Brazilian economy. There is another type of tourism on which money is spent in Brazil. Travelers also spend money, but they usually bargain because bargaining is a common practice in Brazilian culture. They bargain for accommodations in locals' houses. Sharing their bathroom, living room with travelers, locals receive around US\$ 15.00 / day from travelers. Locals' houses accommodations are cheaper than many hotels in tourist cities that cost around US\$ 100.00 / day. Eating at individual food vendors, travelers can have cheap meals, and they can spend less money travelling. For example, travelers can eat with Brazilian people in the streets paying around US\$ 3.00 for the same food that workers eat every day. Called "done plate", the most popular food is made from rice, beans, beef, and fried eggs, which composes the main meal. Although in a big hotel in Sao Paulo tourists pay around US\$ 120.00 per meal, an inexpensive option is the informal restaurants in locals' houses or in individual food merchants spending less than US\$ 5.00 for a tasty and popular food. In brief, tourists are important to Brazil because of their strong currency. Being attracted to Brazil because of its beautiful natural places and its strong structure to tourism, visitors can act as tourists staying in wonderful hotels and eating in sophisticated restaurants. However, they can act as travelers; fortifying informal tourism, they can take advantage and know the country spending less money.

Tourism in Brazil is a growing sector. Making tourism an important economic field in the country, the visitors leave a lot of money in the Brazilian economy. They make some investments very useful to the national economy, and sometimes they invest in social programs, too. This is helpful for its communities and needy people. First of all, many social programs are made in poor communities. Visiting and becoming enchanted with some places and communities in Brazil, tourists give money to social causes. Furthermore, they open schools, nurseries, and non-profit organizations to benefit locals. Second, spending some money on tourism and having a stronger currency, tourists begin also to invest in the property market and other markets. In short, these investments can increase the Brazilian economy, and it improves some communities. Both the visitor spending money travelling and the visitor making investments in Brazil have strengthened the national economy and its society with successful social projects.

On the other hand, tourism can also bring some negative impacts such as increasing violence and sex tourism in the country. From the standpoint of negative impacts, there is some loss of identify and values. Adapting to tourist demands, artists have made changes in the design of their products to bring them more in line with the new costumer's tastes. For

instance, in Salvador city they usually make crafts with the Brazilian flag in a "berimbau," which is a musical instrument symbol of Bahia culture. Attending visitors demand, some craft artists begin to use the American flag in "berimbau" craft modifying their art sometimes losing the characteristics and the cultural value. Another drastic problem is commercial sexual exploitation of children and young women which has increased, paralleling with the growth of tourism in Brazil. Increasing with the growth of mass tourism, crime rates typically increase. The presence of a large number of tourists with a lot of money to spend, and bringing valuables cameras, and jewelry, increases the attraction for criminals. There are two different ways to minimize the negative impacts. By improving the government projects to decrease social problems, Brazil can drop its trouble with violence and have a secure place to offer its visitors. Taking care if its social problems and its huge distance between poor and rich people, Brazil can continue to be wonderful place to tourists spend their money in tourism or business.

Brazil offers many opportunities for tourism. Having little money, visitors can choose to be travelers, and they can know Brazil spending less money than tourists. Although tourists chose big hotels and restaurants which offer expensive meals made by renowned chefs, travelers can know the same beautiful beaches, and exotic places, spending around 80% less money. Contributing to the growth of the tourism sector in Brazil, visitors make tourism an important economic field in the country. Giving money to social causes, tourists make important improvement in needy communities. Visitors bring a lot of money to the country, but from another point of view this can be negative impact when it causes an increase of violence and sex exploitation of children and young women. Offering qualified hotels, Brazil has employees prepared to speak English with foreign tourists. On one hand, there are cities such as Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Salvador which have a good structure for luxury tourism. On the other hand, these cities have good opportunities for travelers to experience living like locals and have a good time with them. Some example of excellent places to visit and with superior infrastructure for tourism in Brazil are Sao Paulo city (in Sao Paulo state), Rio de Janeiro city (in Rio de Janeiro state), Fernando de Noronha (in Pernambuco state), Bonito (in Mato do Grosso state), Abruolhos (in Bahia state), and much more. You can get more information in <http://www.braziltour.com/site/en/home/index.php>.

## **The Greedy Man and the Little Princess**

*(This is a group-written folktale. Students used new vocabulary and structures to create 2-4 sentences each and then combined them.)*

*R/W 20*

Once upon a time, a rich man lived in a palace and he had everything he could ever hope for. However, he was still not happy because he had no friends. He lived alone in an enormous home. Nobody liked him because he was so selfish. He had a lot of money, but he was stingy with his money. He never wanted to share. Every single day he ate beef, chicken and all kinds of delicious foods. Everyone could smell these

foods when they passed outside his home. In addition to being selfish, he was greedy. He had everything, but he still wanted to have everything that everyone else had too.

One day he fell ill. He had visited a poor man in a hut (just to see what else he “needed” for his life) and he contracted a virus. He was so ill that he passed out on the street far from his home. He was unconscious and could not wake up again to get to a doctor or to his own house. At first, he was visited by a bad witch who was jealous of him and who was also greedy. She stole all of his property, including his clothing! He got so cold that he woke up for a few minutes and he could smell the scrumptious bread that a nearby shopper was carrying home for dinner.

The rich man found new luck, despite his greediness. This shopper was a little princess who had traveled to this market to get the best bread in the area (it was filled with chocolate). She saw the poor man unclothed and sad. She took pity on him and she gave him her entire loaf of bread to eat. Because she was a little princess and because she was so kind, she convinced the townspeople to help the man get to the doctor. He was saved!

After the rich man became well, he realized how terrible his past had been. He worked with the little princess to help the people in the village. He shared his home, making it into a very large apartment building, and he shared his money and his food too. Everyone worked together with the rich man and the little princess and the entire village lived happily ever after.

The end

## GRE Issue Essay

*Chia-Jung Tsai (Jessica)*

*R/W 60*

**Issue: All nations should help support the development of a global university designed to engage students in the processes of solving the world’s most persistent problems.**

Living in the modern world, we benefit from international cooperation and share our power to create the advanced society. However, there are still many persistent social problems staying with us. The horrible diseases such as AIDS, the starvation in Africa, and also the urgent global warming phenomenon threatened us. Some experts indicate that all nations should help support the development of a global university, which provides curriculums studying social problems. Absolutely, as a resident in the world, it’s our destiny to fight for peace, security and progress. The great opinion of establishing a global university seems necessary to the society.

However, should “all the nations” spend a lot of money supporting a global university? Building up a global university, the nation should hire plenty of workers with intelligence to update the information of all kinds of social problems and enough teachers to instruct students, since those issues need experts and students from various fields all together to discuss and reach some conclusions. For many countries, they are still struggling with serious social problems; maybe a global university can work in the future, but it can’t help

anything right now. The government needs to recruit all kinds of supports from various people to solve the problems instead of putting all the efforts and spending money supporting the global university, unless those countries’ finances have improved.

If we ignore the finances subject, establishing a global university can at best help enrolled students know better about the world’s most persistent social problems. It can be an academic center which provides plenty of courses concerning global issues and cultivates the most excellent students of the nation. However, when it comes to what kind of professional realms we need to solve the problems, the answer may be broad specialists. As a result, I still doubt the substantial benefit from a global university. It seems impossible to include all the social problems.

In my opinion, a global university may only grasp some general issues to study. Take starvation for example, the problems in the poverty-stricken countries in Africa are related to climate, business, sources, and diplomacy. However, students in a global university cannot be equipped for all the professions. On the other hand, students with diverse major in a common university can cooperate with each other in the future careers to solve the social problems. Let me put it this way, it’s more important to improve students’ abilities in a normal university than to establish a global university.

On the negative perspective, many serious global problems will never consequently disappear; the world’s most persistent social problems are difficult to resolve. We human beings have struggled with AIDS for a period. The experts have looked for remedies for a long time however in vain. That’s unquestionable we have enough professionals devoted to the medical. Moreover, though more and more experts graduated from schools and are refreshing the experiments, pity that, it’s still not time for the achievement. What people can do working in other areas is wait and see. It’s unreasonable all nations are supposed to develop a global university to cultivate experts. Given that country’s universities are well developed, the professionals will be sufficient.

In conclusion, the will to build a global university is just like a castle in the air. Considering the expenditure we the government will spend and the little benefit we will get, the idea seems nothing more than redundancy. To achieve the same goal, we should implement adequately the courses concerning global issues in every department at each school in order to cultivate a student who has both specified academic foundation and astute mind knowing well about those serious world’s social problems.

## Learn English Using English!

*Cesar Augusto Idrobo-Giraldo*

*R/W 60*

Have you ever heard the quote that says “practice makes the master”? Apparently, some students at the English Language Institute (ELI) haven’t because they have been constantly speaking in their native language. That’s why in order to have good and satisfactory results learning English, the

ELI has created this rule—English-only requirement on ELI property—with the purpose of helping the students in their process of learning English. However, some students say that they should be allowed to talk in their own languages whenever and wherever they want because according to them it is very hard to communicate with other people. I completely agree with the English-only policy and I think it should be enforced on the ELI property anytime and in the extracurricular activities as well.

First, the constant practice of English helps you to learn the language faster. Not only that, but also when you are speaking English you are using your grammar, listening and speaking skills. That's why it is so important to practice what you have learned because that's the only way you prove if you are using the English rules in the right way. Also, practicing English, as much as possible, is good because you can identify what are the mistakes you have been making; therefore, you will improve your English because you won't make them again.

Second, we know that the ELI is a place where a lot of people from around the world come to learn English, which means the people here talk different languages. In addition, there are a considerable number of people who come from certain countries. The problem that is facing the ELI is that these groups are talking in their languages and people who don't speak those languages may feel different from the other group of students. That's why it is so important to talk one language because this is the only way we can communicate and integrate with other people and learn from other cultures as well. For example: last semester, during an ELI activity [volleyball] most of the group who joined were Spanish speakers, and there was one Asian person. What happened is that all the Spanish were speaking Spanish and the Asian person felt very uncomfortable because she didn't know what was going on.

Even though some ELI students say that it is very useful for them to understand grammar in their own language when they don't understand, this is not useful at all because you may understand what is the structure, but in your language. This won't work because what will happen is that you will know the grammar rules and other topics in your language but not in English, and when it comes to test they won't ask you what the grammar rule in your language is; everything is going to be in English. This is another reason why it is so important to practice English, and not only that, but also learn English using English.

In conclusion, the English-only policy is good for all of us because it will benefit us in short and long terms. You may have noticed this, but you don't learn English from the books, you learn English from the real life because these are experiences that you will remember forever. Therefore, you will remember your mistake so you won't make it again. We also have to recognize that the ELI's policy wants to help students to achieve their goal of learning English. They don't want to bother you at any time. What they want is to make sure that you have taken advantage of the opportunities that are given and that you practice your English every time. Enforcing this policy the ELI will help you to learn English faster and with more accuracy. The policy will show results in the sense that you'll

learn English and it will be a proof that the ELI programs for learning are working out well.

## **The Catholic Church and Contraception**

*Guillermo Chiaway*

*R/W 60*

Since old times, people have tried to avoid pregnancies by using different methods. There is a specific case in The Bible that could tell us how old the use of contraceptive is. Onan, which is a biblical character, used a contraception known as coitus interruptus in which sexual intercourses do not culminate as in a regular sexual relationship. Nowadays, contraceptives are used worldwide in a wide variety of types such as pills, barriers, patch, and internal devices.

A great controversial debate has been raised about the use of contraceptives. Many are in favor and many others are against. One of these institutions that opposes the use of contraceptive and promotes the utilization of NFP (Natural Family Planning) is the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church, based on a great amount of theological and philosophical research accompanied with many medical studies, has established that the use of contraceptives is morally wrong. Two are the main reasons why The Catholic Church conceives contraceptive as not convenient for the people: the right use of sexuality and the fact that many contraceptives are abortive. In addition, although many people say that due to the fact that The Catholic Church is opposed to contraceptives, the number of abused children is increasing, it can be demonstrated that this affirmation is totally wrong. Therefore, people can see the benefits of choosing NFP as the best option at the time people decide how many children they will have.

First of all, The Catholic Church affirms that sexuality has two dimensions: one is concerning pleasure and the other is related to procreation. Everything in the world is created with purposes and sexuality is not the exception. When people use things not considering the ends for which they were created, then they are using nature in a bad way. When people use contraception, these two dimensions are separated artificially, and, therefore, the purpose of sexuality is not fulfilled completely. While The Catholic Church promotes the right use of sexuality, it also promotes parental responsibility. Many NFP methods have demonstrated their effectiveness such as The Billings Method that is 97.5% effective and, therefore, has only 2.5% margin of error.

Moreover, people should be aware that many contraceptives are abortive. Birth control pills, for example, produce any of these three effects when consumed: they avoid that spermatozoids and eggs get together, they don't let eggs go out the ovaries, and they modify the uterus preventing the fertilized egg to be implanted there (this last effect is abortive). Many other contraceptives also alter the womb such as IUCD or coil, and the morning-after pill.

However, many people say that violence against children is increasing because they are unwanted creatures, and The Catholic Church is to blame because of its position against contraception (Cortes, 2007, page 8).

Although many people think The Catholic Church is wrong and its position increases home violence, it is totally false because The Catholic Church also follows and promotes the 5<sup>th</sup> commandment which is “Thou shall not kill,” so The Catholic Church is not only against contraceptive, but also against any kind of violence. People who hit their children, even if they are Catholics or not, are not following the teaching of The Catholic Church. Therefore, if they don’t obey one of the most essential parts of Christianity which is to love your neighbor (and thus your relatives), it is very hard that they follow other Catholic teaching such as the ones related to contraception. If, hypothetically, the Catholic Church would yield and say that the use of contraceptives is O.K. then there is no possibility that those people who use violence to raise their children will follow the “new teaching” of The Church because they simply don’t care about what The Catholic Church says. We see no direct relation between the teaching of The Catholic Church against contraception and family violence.

Contraceptives are used by people worldwide, but many of them might not know what they are really using. They simply are using what they think is the most convenient for them. No consequences and broken rules are being taken into account at the time they use contraceptives. Beside contraceptives, many other things are being used such as cloning or embryonic stem cell without a profound reflection about their real purposes, ethical and moral values, or consequences beyond the short-term “benefits.” A turning point in those technological advances should be considered in order not to lose the real perspective of people: their dignity as human beings.

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## Living in These United States

*Bruna B. Cavalcanti*  
*Grammar for Writing*

“Where your dreams become true” This is Disney’s famous slogan, which is applicable for living in America for some people. If your dream is living in a place where you can interact with machines all the time, get an excellent education at the best universities in the world plus have fantastic quality and efficient services from many companies, this place is called America. Efficient services, self-service culture and excellent universities are the things that I most like in America.

One reason why I really like living in America is efficiency and practicality of some companies. Sometimes we can solve our problem with just one simple phone call. It’s amazing how some companies work when their services are needed. For example, My macbook, named Little Baby, broke 2 weeks ago and I just needed to make two phone calls to get it fixed - It was fantastic. When I called Apple the first time, I had to describe the problem. Then, they said they would send me a box next day. The next morning, a special box made especially for my Little Baby was there. All I had to do was to put my Baby in it and call the company to get the box back. When I called them, in about five minutes they knocked at my door and took my Little Baby for his first surgery. The surgery took just five hours and Apple sent my Baby back the same day completely repaired; a new hard drive was installed. This efficiency is the reason why I love living in America.

Another reason why I like living in America is the self-service culture. I like to see people serving themselves practically everywhere. A common example is the gas station, where the customers pump their own gas rather than have an attendant do it. Although I’m too lazy to pump my Big Baby car sometimes, I love the fact I can do it here. Another example is Self-Service Check-In, which offers a convenient way for people to buy airline tickets online. We can even fly to another city without talking to anyone if there is no luggage to check in. Even though Americans tend to interact more with machines than with people, it’s amazing to contemplate how practical they are, and how they can do things like buy a newspaper, go grocery shopping, or buy several types of items from vending machines without talking to anyone. This self-service culture is the reason why I like living in America.

Another reason why I like living in America is the quality of the universities here. American universities are at the top of the list of the best universities in the world, for example, Harvard University, Stanford University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology and University Of Florida (Go gators!) are there. Those universities have the best teachers and an admirable infrastructure. For instance, they have well equipped gyms and labs, wonderful libraries and big auditoriums. Those are the reasons why those universities have millions of students

from all over the world. After finishing school, students can get excellent jobs in big companies like Microsoft, Motorola, Ford, Coach, and more. They can also get a better job in their home country. My Brazilian friend got his doctorate degree at the University of Florida and since he went back to Brazil he has been getting a lot of opportunities to make more money, and his salary is much better than it was before. Getting a degree in an American university, I can find at least a decent job in any place in the world. The excellent quality of universities in America is another reason why I like living in America.

All in all, the reasons that I most like about living in these America are efficient services, self-service culture and excellent universities. I could fix my Little Baby Macbook by making just two phone calls because of the efficient service here in America. I appreciate the fact that I can pump my Big Baby car because I just love the self-service culture here. In addition, having the opportunity to study in excellent universities makes me feel optimistic about my professional life. What about you? Do you like the idea of living in this digital world where your dreams become true? If you do, go on line and apply for your visa.

## **Marriage Among Young People**

*Vanella Perez Houtmann*

*R/W 60*

Since the twentieth century, marriages among young people have been considered to be a controversial issue in different societies and cultures around the world. During the past decades, it was common for families to accept marriages between young people with the ages of 18 to 24. For them, being married meant to be an adult; however, nowadays it is recommended to be an adult to get married. Adults now argue and discuss whether to agree or disagree to let adolescents get married.

Getting married is not as easy as many adolescent would think it is; it takes a great responsibility. In order for a marriage to be successful, it needs to have economic stability. For an adolescent, life is just starting because they are beginning to face real life by themselves, as well as to be involved and be able to handle difficult situations. Because adolescents are at the phase of getting into college, they do not have the economic stability that is needed in order to maintain a home if they are married. An adolescent may have a part time job during his/her studies; however, the money he/she earns would never be enough to sustain a family and to keep up with all the expenses that a house has. Probably, an adolescent might want to get married without having a baby at the first instance; but still, it is hard to keep living with the same conditions that his/her family would offer him/her during the study time. Most young people are not aware of this situation; therefore, when they think they feel in love they take the opportunity to get married without thinking about the future and their living conditions.

A marriage is not only based on an economic stability; it also needs an emotional stability as well. Adolescents are not prepared for a long-lasting relationship and a marriage is a

long-lasting relationship where both the man and the woman have to make a commitment between themselves, to promise to love one another, to value one another, and to stay together through sickness and health, for better and for worse. Because they are in a transitional stage, adolescents' feelings towards a person might change as the time passes by. An adolescent goes through a period from being a child to becoming an adult; therefore, this transition might affect their personal decisions as well as their feelings. Peer pressure during adolescence might influence their feelings too; for example, if a boy likes a girl and their friends think that she's not pretty enough, the boy would probably stop dating her to prevent that they make fun of him. A young adult should not care about other's opinions. He should be enough matured to make his own decisions in life without caring what others say.

On the other hand, some people agree with the idea of young people getting married because they feel love towards each other, thus they think they are ready for a long-lasting relationship. They might be right; they might feel that they are meant for each other; therefore, they are prepared to live as a couple and to start a family if those are their plans for their future. But, are they prepared economically to sustain a house and a family while they are studying at college? Are they sure that she/he is the person that they want to be with for their rest of their lives?

In conclusion, I disagree with marriage among young people for the reasons stated previously. Young people should enjoy their college life and prepare and plan for the future instead of thinking about getting married at such an early age. Life is too short to make quick decisions without using our heads. In love, we have to use both heart and mind, no matter how deep your feelings are.

## **Should Drinking Be Allowed Under 21?**

*Christoph Baires*

*R/W 60*

In most states of the U.S. you are allowed to drink alcohol at the age of 21 years. In most European countries it's 18, in Germany even 16 years. Many Americans, especially youths, know about that and consequently they question this American law. Does it really make sense to set the legal drinking age that high? There are some pro- and counterarguments which can be considered when setting a responsible and useful drinking age.

Alcohol can be deadly when using too much but what most people don't know is that it actually can also be healthy. Alcohol can help the body circulating the blood and lowering the blood pressure. Especially wine can be useful in that sense. However, the sorts of wine which help are limited. Red wine is more likely to lower high blood pressure than white wine. In my opinion, this is definitely a good argument for setting the legal drinking age lower, although doctors warn – for a good reason – not to use alcohol too much, but in a responsible way.

Newspapers show it everyday. The news on TV show it everyday. "Young man dies in car crash under alcohol influence." Headlines like this one cover newspapers very



often, almost daily. Of course alcohol can't only be healthy for your body. If drinking in an irresponsible way – that is drinking too much--it can have two negative effects and especially young people are likely to suffer from them just because they want to have fun and don't see those possible effects. Too much consumption of alcohol can destroy your body, especially your liver, and result in cancer. Another negative effect of alcohol may be addiction. Both effects can cause death.

Another problem is that many young people ignore the influence of alcohol; consequently, they still want to drive very often. We can see the results in the news very often. Then we always read "Teenager lost control of his car and crashed." The burning point is that most teenagers know that but still do it. They don't really recognize the danger of alcohol. So how can the government wake those "kids" up? Is that possible? Do they really need to see pictures of the victims in order to understand the danger? Some countries, like Germany, show those kind of pictures to people who are known as drunk drivers. The question is just if it really works.

The USA is involved in the Iraq War right now which caused the 4,000<sup>th</sup> death of an American soldier two weeks ago and about 1.2 million Iraqi deaths so far. And still, the American military is still trying to recruit more soldiers which they can use at war. Many of those recruits are still under aged and just turned 18 years old. The question is the following: Why should an 18-year-old boy be allowed to go to war and fight for his life, but not to drink alcohol? Is alcohol really more dangerous than war? Even if you go to war and are careful, it is easy to die in a fight. But on the contrary, it is not easy to die of a responsible consumption of alcohol. The U.S. government should think about it.

The large consumption of alcohol helps the American economy a lot, especially in bad times like now. Alcohol is always bought by the population, especially by alcoholics because of their "need" to consume a lot alcohol. On the other hand, people who are addicted might get into lots of trouble. Usually it takes only a short time till the employer you are working for notices your addiction and probably has to fire you. Then there you are with no job, no money, but an addiction which costs money. Because of your disease, the addiction to alcohol, you are looking for other ways to get your "stuff," except of at least buying it legally.

What should be the legal age of drinking? Or how can we decide what the legal age should be? This is a very difficult issue. In my opinion it's almost impossible to find a proper solution since people differ from each other and some are earlier mature and know how to act responsibly. Others are way behind and just try to have fun without thinking of possible consequences. That makes it difficult for the government to set a general legal age. I personally can understand the actual legal age of 21, but in relation with other laws, like the recruiting law, I can't. The government should try to build laws more logically. Otherwise people will always discuss laws and further decisions by the government.

## **Uniform Policy**

*Lourdes Fuller*

*R/W 60*

The society all around Florida is getting upset about the new uniform policy that is being implemented in five elementary schools by now. The fact of using uniforms is making a big controversy in different levels: school board, students and parents. On the one hand, the opponents of the dress code policy stated that having a uniform policy clearly violates the constitutional rights. However, rather than discouraging the student's psychological development or breaching their rights, this new policy represents an important step to promote a variety of values like responsibility, creativity, discipline and feelings of belonging in the students.

Some students and parents are against this policy mainly because using uniforms will stop them from developing their personality in an environment that promotes freedom. Also, one of the main beauties of this country is that taste of freedom that advocates the society. However, these examples are not directly related by any chance. That same concept of freedom has been tainted by society, especially with the lack of formalities in the schools. The uniform policy gives the student the opportunity of picking between different options, it isn't like a cookie cutter style at all. It's only a simple dress code that will promote students identification with their school. Using a simple uniform is not like muzzles in their mouths to prevent their right of expression.

Opponents support their position of being against uniforms in schools because this will interfere with the sense of dependency on the students. However, if you are a responsible parent and want to teach and encourage your children to be an independent person it will take more than having a uniform at school. On the other hand, if you want to promote this independent characteristic in the students, try to give them responsibilities, teach them that their correct or wrong behavior will have consequences. Having a dress code in the school will encourage independence because it will build the base for a responsible adult. A parent will teach them about economy and how having uniforms lets them save more and finally what more independence is there than saving some time every morning instead of think what should I wear today?.

Another major problem with policies which are too vigorously enforced is the humiliation and fear suffered by the students. However, this kind of situation is more likely to happen with the actual dress code that makes academic staff more like fashion police rather than teachers. For example: the three B's (no butts, breasts or bellies), no ripped clothes, no bandannas, no caps, baggy pants and don't show too much cleavage. Why does the academic staff have to spend that much time to take care of all these issues? With a clear school uniform policy that allowed a couple of options but still keep a standard in the school, the quality of education will definitely increase and improve. The main reason for this is because professors haven't to invest more of their time being school's deputies and giving punishment like Saturday school which directly affects the academic staff and ruins their weekend too.

Although school uniform policy won't be the secret key to resolve behavioral problems in the school, it's an important step and element of support to improve the educational system. The actual dress code obviously doesn't work well, which represents that it's time for a change.

## Abortion

*Ebtisam BinHussein (B)*

*R/W 60*

Abortion is an age-old controversial issue; it has been judged from many views. It's been looked at as a religious issue, a political matter, and a social concern. Many people are against abortion for many reasons which lie under pro-life reasoning. On the other hand, there's a group of people who believe in the freedom of choice, people who are pro-choice.

Freedom of choice is the right of every human being; for that, a mother is entitled to choose whether to keep her unborn child or not. Sometimes having an unplanned baby can complicate a parent's life. If the mother is not ready, then the child will be brought into a dreadful life. The mother might be emotionally and mentally disconnected from her own baby because she wasn't ready for such a responsibility. Others should not interfere with a woman's—the mother—decision.

Pro-life believers claim that a fetus, since the moment of conception, becomes a human person that is entitled to essential human rights. Therefore, an unborn child has the right to live. Abortion protestors say that abortion is a murder, that it's killing a human and taking his human privileges. The Pro-life community states that abortion concerns not one life, but two; the mother's and her baby, so the choice is not only hers. It happened and she has to accept it. No one has the right to end another living soul's life just because it's inconvenient for them.

Studies have been made to prove that a human life becomes a human person at some point after conception. In fact, the heartbeat doesn't start until a couple of weeks later. How can it be murder if there is no heartbeat? In the first week of pregnancy the baby is still an embryo. It's not a conscious soul; for that, the mother has the prior right to choose whether to continue with her pregnancy or not. Abortion is not involving two lives if it's in the first weeks.

Of course there's an exception for every rule. A woman has the right to choose whether she's keeping the baby or not, but only under certain circumstances. It must happen in the early stages of pregnancy before the embryo or fetus attains consciousness or becomes a human person with a living soul. Abortion should be approved only if there's a good reason for having it; for example, abortion is unreasonable if the mother is having it because she doesn't want to lose her figure, or if the mother is a prostitute that wants to keep her career going so whenever she gets pregnant she aborts the child. Yes the choice is in the woman's hand, but sometimes people make unreasonable decisions that need to be monitored and controlled.

Saving the life of a soul before it begins is better than bringing a child to hate and neglect in this world. There are

many mothers whom are forced to keep their babies because of the religion they follow, or the community they live in, or simply for not having enough money for the operation. Still, abortion is a hard decision that needs to be made after thinking and reasoning or remorse will follow. The morality of abortion is a major issue; it lies within a gray area that should be surrounded by rules and requirements. It's a woman's decision, but it must be the right decision.

## Single Parents

*Paola Cardenas*

*R/W 60*

Living in a world where every day rules are being broken or changed, is something that many people believe is complicated. One of the most popular ideas about our society is that its main support is the family. This idea has been supported by different specialists in the area of sociology. In the past, people used to think that real families were those that had the 4 main members: father, mother, son(s) and daughter(s). However, in these days this idea has changed because now it is common to see families that don't have all the 4 members; it means that there are families without one of the parent figures and parents that are with the rest of the family are defined as single parents.

A single parent has a lot of responsibilities because he or she has to be mother and father at the same time. There are different causes why this group of parents is increasing every day. One of the possible causes can be the death of one of the parents; this is the saddest cause because it is when the mother or father who continue living has to face the reality and he or she has to help their children with the loss of their mother or their father. This kind of single parent receives support of the rest of their family because they know that it won't be easy to leave their pain and to care of the children.

Another cause why every day it is more common to see single parents is the high number of couples who get divorces. There are special cases that when a couple breaks up and they have children, one of the parents disappears. It is one of the hardest situations because the parent who continues with the children has to explain to the kids about the situation and he or she has to care for the mental health of the children because when one parent leaves the home, children are who suffer the consequences.

When we talk about single parents, it is important to mention those cases that have been really controversial. Decades ago being a single mother was something much criticized because it was unacceptable that a woman had a child without being married. Single mothers suffered discrimination in different places such as schools where it wasn't allowed to register a child without the name of the both parents. Society was really cruel with single mothers just because they didn't follow a traditional rule about being married before having a baby.

Between all the changes that our society has suffered the discussion of single parents inside of the society has been really good because people have learned to respect those who

for any circumstance couldn't follow the rule. Single parents in these days are people who are admirable because it is not easy to raise a kid alone. Because of this, all those who are single parents deserve to be respected by all society's member.

## **Spoiled Pets vs. Starving Children: What is Truly a Work of Art?**

*Maria Dantas*

*R/W 60*

American citizens have been spending too much money on spoiled pets in the last decade. Aging baby boomers, elderly people, gay couples, empty nesters are the kind of people that are getting so attached to pets. Consequently, the owners are giving excessive treatment to pets as they are considered their own "children." While they do so, millions of people are dying from hunger and malnutrition in Africa. By Reducing insurance, vet care, supplies and pet service expenses, they would save many people's lives on that continent.

Cultural values have been changing a lot in America lately. Although some people still have pets to enjoy from time to time, when it suits them, the majority is switching their feeling towards pets. It seems that American pet owners love and cherish their puppies and kittens as they are real children by taking excessive care of them. Today, there is exorbitant treatment for pets in the United States while there are so many people dying of starvation in some parts of the world.

Nowadays, animals are getting more rights in America than ever. According to "A politically correct pet project..." in the Gainesville Sun (June 3, 2004), it is not very PC to say pet "owner" because this word encourages owners to dump the pets whenever they want to. Instead they should say pet "guardian" and legislation is being considered to change this definition. San Francisco, one of the most pet supportive cities in America, has braced this project. The city even has a Pet Pride Day and it provides luxurious furnished private condominiums for cats and dogs.

Another example of excessive treatment for pets is the dog day care centers in America. They are becoming very popular and spreading all over the nation. The first Day Care Camp was established in California in 2003. Since then, this type of business has been considered a great success. "With doggie day care centers, people can have their careers and have their dogs too," said dog trainer Susan Claire from Central Bark, one of at least 10 centers in South Florida for spoiled dogs. The pet guardian spends between \$25 and \$35 a day but his pet will be pampered by qualified professionals. The pet industry has grown tremendously and it has been considered somewhat recession-proof because pets have replaced children since the number of single people, childless couples and elderly have increased in this country. Chris Gaba, the owner of Central Bark, another dog day care center, said that some dogs are spoiled even more than most children. Among other things, she mentioned some dogs that go to her day care center by their own limousine, wear Louis Vuitton collars, have homemade biscotti (no sugar, preservatives or wheat) as a snack or a diet lunch (steamed rice, ground beef and bottled water).

Florida, another state that has a significant number of pets due to the great number of elderly people, has been blooming with pet establishments in the last decade. According to "Pampered Pets are in Dog heaven with Day Care..." in the Gainesville Sun (January 15, 2001), busy dog owners have been spoiling their pets by sending them to a doggie day care center in Miami. Elena Lopez, the owner, said that it is a big success because it is an outdoor center not only to have fun but also to be disciplined. In addition to that, pets receive love, treats and exercise for a low cost of \$35 a day. The camp provides school bus transportation, snacks, a bone shaped pool and other exciting activities. As Elena said, "What I wanted to do was offer a place for animals to have fun." This is making her a successful businesswoman because many people are taking over the idea. Also, Camp Canine dog day care located in Boca Raton and Fort Lauderdale, owned by Lisa Schettino, picks up dogs in an air conditioned bus in which dogs sit side-by-side strapped in seat belts.

In addition, domestic pets are more likely to be well off than human beings. There is a law in Florida that ensures pets get all the rights of a beneficiary in a trust. This is done by the owner in recognition of the animal's affection. I really think loneliness is changing family values. According to "Retirement Center for pets Proposed," in the Gainesville Sun (October 12, 2004), a construction of a \$3 million retirement center for cats and dogs would be a great idea. The UF dean of the University of Florida's Veterinary Medicine College said that veterinarians would not only do research about pet-owner relationship, but also take care of old pets. Since Florida is considered a retirement state, many elderly pet guardians would adopt the idea. Each owner has only to donate about \$25,000 to build it.

It seems that having "a dog's life" in America has changed its connotation in the last few years. As stated in "It's a Dog's Life..." in Time Magazine (May 19, 2003), Americans are spending more than ever on pet products and services. In 2003, people were expected to spend \$ 31 billion compared to almost a decade ago when they has spent \$ 17 billion dollars. Last year, these numbers rose to \$ 45 billion. New jobs were created because of that. Today you may make some profit just by taking pets for a walk. Pets are certainly getting more rights than ever. They are not considered properties anymore, but companions, because there are more single affectionate guardians now than in the past thirty years. Edward Greenberg stated that his dog, mixed breed Carnie, is better than kids because there is no college to pay for. Animal Fair, compared to Vanity Fair, a lifestyle magazine, sells about 200,000 copies a week. Wendy Diamond, the editor, said that she has a bag for her dog that matches every outfit she has. *It is really chic to the bone.* Cindy Adams, a gossip columnist, said that she would go to the theater on foot on a rainy day while her driver would take her dog to a play date. Also, for "Yappy Hour" in Miami, pet guardians may go out twice a week with their pets for the night to the *Complete Canine* to find a dog lover.

In these times, being so devoted to their "sweeties," pet consumers carry them to restaurants and take them on vacation and work. Due to this fact, hotels, airline companies and restaurants are providing pet services. Travel companies have rearranged accommodations to provide comfort to Fluffies in

the last few years because pets are considered as family members. Some hotels are offering dog walking concierges and pet behaviorists on staff. In Beverly Hill Hotel, you can find pet rooms decorated with pink doggie bed, pink tennis balls and a biscuit jar filled with bone-shaped cookies with the dog's name written in pink icing, all for \$250 a day. For instance, the pet menu on L'Ermilage, in Beverly Hills, is simply outrageous. Tuna tartar with anchovy essence costs \$19, poached salmon belly with frothed milk is \$23 and caviar with hard-poached eggs cost around \$98 dollars. Also, it is possible to throw a dog birthday party with printed invitations, gift registries and a game called ice rocky in America. You have only to make a reservation at Manhattan's Doggie-Do Salon.

Even though Americans are giving excessive treatment to pets, some pet services are acceptable to get along well with your loved one, but we have to be careful not to be extreme. Baby-sitting service and housekeeper for pets are reasonable because they should not be unattended anyway. In addition, taking pets on a picnic or taking them for a walk to different places is fair because it is a pleasure for both of them. Also, it is acceptable if there is three times more pet food than baby food brand in the supermarket. It means that supermarkets are making more profit selling pet food. Providing light food and high protein diet for pets is suitable, since it is going to be beneficial for their health. On the other hand, feeding them with filet mignon, shrimp or chicken with herb is not recommended by the vets and it is objectionable.

At the other extreme, are those who buy fur coats as much as \$800 or a carrying sack for dogs for almost \$500 is just going beyond the limits of what is reasonable. When a pet dies, it is mindless to freeze-dry and keep it at home for years and years. It is not only expensive to do that but it is also a way to extend the owner's suffering. Although it is sensible to take pets to a vet when they are ill, it is unrealistic to keep them at home instead of in a hospital. The guardian may pay an astronomical bill for the vet's visits. It seems that businesses have really gone to the dogs lately. Recently, Mark Schwart opened a personalized bath stall business for owners to wash their pets in privacy for the price of US\$ 16. Each stall has a tub and 81 degrees temperature controlled water set, reported Cari Merrill.

According to "The Rewards of pet bets" in the Canadian Business (October 22, 2007), US residents spent US\$38.5 billion on maintaining domestic animals in 2006. (Table 1) They spent on vet care/supplies/OTC medicine US\$18.5 billion, with food US\$15.4 billion, live animal purchase US\$1.9 billion and pet services: grooming/boarding US\$2.7 billion. Since pets are being considered family members by the Americans and vet bills have increased, the pet insurance business has boomed in the last few years. As a matter of fact, pet insurance is one of the three most requested voluntary employee benefits behind auto and home insurance. Fixing a broken leg usually costs more than US\$ 1,000 and kidney transplants could easily cost more than US\$ 5,000. In the article "No Slowdown in Spending on our Furry. . .," Rebekah Mooney, a Fort Collins resident, has just spent with her dog US\$ 2,000 for kidney surgery. She said she would feed her dog better than she feeds herself. In addition, she travels only if she finds a person to watch him while she is away. Bob Vetere, the **APPMA** (American Pet

Product Manufacturers Association) president, explained that pet owners want to protect themselves and their pets against unexpected medical expenses. They insure their "babies" to provide reimbursement for any treatment needed, surgery lab fees, x-rays and prescriptions. The average annual premium for a dog insured by Veterinary Pet Insurance, which is based in Brea, California, is US\$250. The Pet health insurance business has doubled its policy writing from US\$72 million to US\$185 million in four years. Big companies such as AT&T and Computer Associates are offering pet insurance as a benefit for their employees.

**Table -1 US Pet Industry Expenditures Table** (years followed by expenditures in billions)

YEAR	AMOUNT SPENT
2008	US\$ 43.4 (estimated)
2007	US\$ 41.2
2006	US\$ 38.5
2005	US\$ 36.3
2004	US\$ 34.4
2003	US\$ 32.4
2002	US\$ 29.5
2001	US\$ 28.5

In a New York Times article published in June 2002, Mrs. Greene said that she was relieved by buying her pet a health insurance; otherwise, she would have paid more than US\$ 5,000 for tests and surgeries on her wounded 9-month-old Irish Wolfhound. On the other hand, Mr. Hunter, who owns four dogs, said, "I don't understand how people can spend US\$ 5,000 or US\$ 6,000 on an animal that can be bought for US\$ 50 or US\$ 60. It's not a wise way to use money. I love my dogs, but I am going to love the next puppy too."

As Americans are losing rational perspective on this love, they are finding ways to spend even more money on their spoiled "children." Pet owners who pamper their pets like family are not being forgotten when their beloved passes away. According to "Startup sells farewells to Fido and Fluffy: Carmel's Pet Angel tests market for pet funerals," in the Indianapolis Business Journal (August 23, 2004), pet funeral services have been required to relieve the grieving process for a lost pet. The companies offer cremation services, funeral home, pick up pet's body, caskets as much as US\$ 396 and urns that ranges from US\$ 30 to US\$ 300. Coleen Ellis, a Pet Angel Memorial Center Owner, said, "As you look at what's going on with baby boomers and empty nesters, animals are becoming our babies." Her store even has a chapel for a pet's human and non-human friends for a memorial service.

There has never been a better time to be a pet. Our Four legged friends are being treated like real children. Leona Helmsley, the billionaire hotel magnate who passed away last August, had left her eight-year-old Maltese, Trouble, a US\$ 12 million inheritance. A German shepherd Gunther III was the richest dog in the world. He received US\$ 80 million in a trust and after he passed away, the wealth passed to his heir Gunther IV.

At the same time, though, almost 16,000 children died from hunger-related causes—one child every five seconds. In

2006 close to 9.7 million children died before their fifth birthday. In recent statistics from *UNICEF*, 26,500 – 30,000 children die each day due to poverty and this happens quietly in some of the poorest villages on earth, far removed from the scrutiny and the conscience of the world. According to “Starvation in Africa” in the [Exodusnews.com](http://www.exodusnews.com) (June 7, 2002) Malawi’s average life expectancy is 37 years. Gutman said that “One quarter of children do not live to see their fifth birthday, 48% of those under five are malnourished.” In 2002, Malawi and Zamboni had the worst shortage in the last fifty years and it was estimated that about 4 million people would suffer from starvation. Halley Coristine wrote about a young mother of five that she tried to sell her children into slavery to feed the other two. As the mother said “. . . they will certainly die if I keep them all. If I sell the oldest ones who are strong enough to work, I will have money to feed my two youngest and perhaps they will have a better chance of surviving.” What would you do if you were in her place?

*UNICEF* planned a humanitarian action for West and Central Africa in 2008. With the amount of US\$ 17,050.953 *UNICEF* – supported programs are expected to reach at least 6 million children and 4 million women this year. Included in these programs are health and nutrition, water/sanitation/hygiene, child protection, education and emergency responses to natural disasters. Seventeen million was almost the amount that Trouble inherited last year. Mrs. Helmsley could have saved many lives if she had given some human thoughts to what life and love is about. Between 5 and 6 million children are dying each year from infectious diseases such as malaria, pneumonia, diarrhea and measles. Malnutrition is the main cause for that. Besides, the United Nations said that approximately 25,000 people die of hunger or hunger-related causes because they are extremely poor, with low standard of living and limited access to social services, according to *Povert.com*. If the twenty two developed countries give 0.7% of their national income almost all of the hunger and diseases related to it can be stopped. It would cost about US\$ 195 billion a year. This is only four times the pet expenditures.

Boarding, grooming, animal purchases, medical care and food cost US pet guardians approximately US\$ 41 billion in 2007, according to the *American Pet Product Manufacturers Association*. We know that Fluff and Fido bring some benefits when it comes to their owners’ health. They help lower blood pressure, reduce stress, reduce heart disease and fight depression. But how better would they be thinking that they have saved so many lives? In 1981, there were 163 million Africans living on US\$ 1.0 a day or less and this number nearly doubled to 316 million in 2001. It is estimated that by the year of 2025, there will be 35 up to 55 million malnourished children. Based on “Global Framework for Action,” it would cost approximately US\$ 7.9 billion a year for specific interventions on 100 million households (US\$ 79 per household). This amount would cover health, nutrition and hygiene, household food security, water treatment, micronutrient supplementation, hand washing with soap and parasite control. (Table 2)

Table – 2 Cost per household per year

INTERVENTION	US\$
1. Health, nutrition & hygiene education	6
2. Household food security	50
3. Micronutrient supplementation	11
4. Household water treatment	4
5. Hand washing with soap	6
6. Parasite control	4
HOUSEHOLD TOTAL	US\$ 79

Spoiling pets may be fun, enjoyable and “a work of the heart,” but there are more important human issues to be considered. It is fair to have a pet as a companion especially if you live in a place where you feel lonely. But giving excessive treatment to pets while there are millions of human beings dying because they do not have enough food to survive, is beyond the limits. According to a *BBC News* (20 July, 2005) article, while Americans spent millions of dollars on their pets, millions of people in Niger were facing a food shortage. Children are dying daily of starvation in feeding centers. The 3 million spent for the pet retirement center in Gainesville would have helped feed some 20,000 children and 250,000 adults in that country, International Development Secretary Hilary Benn told the BBC.

I really want to believe that the world is not turning inside out. We should consider and give some thoughts to what is our priority in this life. Would you spend too much money spoiling your pet or would you prefer saving some human lives in Africa?

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## English-Only Requirement on ELI Property

*Kazuki Yasui*  
*R/W 60*

At the ELI we have an English-only requirement on ELI property. Some students and teachers don't take it so seriously; on the other hand, a few teachers and students do. Because it is a rule, should teachers and student take it more seriously?

If students speak only English at the ELI as the requirement says, their English might improve better than if they did not practice because they would try to use it somehow even though they can't speak English very well. Moreover, since the ELI is a melting pot and there are so many people who speak different languages, I think that the requirement may have been made to make all students equal. I often see students who ignore the requirement even though teachers warned them not to speak their own language even in class. During class, instead of just hearing English, other languages fly in and out of the other students' ears because of those students who are not following the rules. I understand that some teachers are strict about the rules. However, I think the requirement shouldn't be too strict.

As the famous saying goes, we should practice "moderation in all things." In other words, the rules shouldn't be either too strict or too loose. In a group where there are some people who can't speak the language, and especially in class, students shouldn't use other languages. However, they are supposed to be allowed to speak another language in appropriate situations; people who can't speak English very well get stressed more easily when they speak English, and they might want to speak their own language when there are other people who can also speak that language. In this case, speaking other languages should be allowed to some extent. We have a saying in Japan, "Perseverance leads to success." Those people will become a little more relaxed when they speak their own language, and they might gain motivation to keep learning English even if they become tired of it. For that reason, I don't think that the rules should be enforced so strictly outside of class.

Therefore, I would say that the requirement should exist to motivate students to improve their English, but students shouldn't be obligated to follow it at all times.

## Uniform Policy

*Jetzabel Gross*  
*R/W 60*

It is usual for most of the countries to use different dress codes or uniforms in different areas of society (work, school, hospitals, religions, etc.) and according to "Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia" (2008), "A uniform is a set of standard clothing worn by members of an organization while participating in that organization's activity". "Ordinary dress codes, which dictate what can be worn by a student in schools" (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, 2003) don't seem to be enough to limit the different clothing styles worn by students these days. That's why some countries have turned to implementation of school uniforms. Though this measure can be good and viewed as kind of clean and professional, there can be a lot of controversy when viewing the different view points and sides of this issue. It can be accepted or even completely rejected by some people provoking them to act in some extreme ways.

The implementation of school uniforms is something that generates a lot of controversy and on one hand the common belief of it is that:

1. It doesn't help for the expression of individuality and uniqueness of the human being. In fact they are perceived as a matter that lumps them into a category that probably does not agree with their own attitudes and personalities. According to the "School fashion police" (2003) article, "Many times, the parents are cooperative and other times, they think that the dress code is unreasonable. Even the best student will tell you they ought to be able to wear what they want." In addition uniforms tend to make everyone the same, and there is a popular saying that "clothes make the person," so by implementing the uniform policy it only would make everyone the same, same people sitting in a room, without personality, gray and with regular thinking. Uniforms used in prison were originally thought as an implement for surrender, lower and depress personalities. And in school this may not be the best choice because these are young people that are growing up and trying to turn into persons, and starting in an environment where they can't express or let their personalities spring is not healthy and may even cause psychological problems for their future conduct or behavior.
2. Also there is the issue that if discipline requires a dress code/uniform then it is a reflection on the institution and on the teacher more than on the students and restricting them more is not something that's going to fix that. But on this issue some school board member say that "by using them the discipline problem has been reduced and even have eliminated the pressure to wear brand name clothing and create school pride" ("School uniform policy . . .," n/y).

Trying to view this topic on a different scale it may be that the implementation of school uniforms and dress codes has a good side. It actually could help preventing bad/mean competition between students and also help in concentration on study because it would not distract other students. Therefore, in some level, the usage of uniforms would promote a sense of belonging for different students. By using a uniform of a certain school students could identify them anywhere if wearing the uniform and even feel some kind of pride or belonging to a certain institution and group and this is actually a very natural instinct that some animals show. We are social animals and we have this need and urge to belong to a group, assemblage, clan, etc.

Personally, I believe that the implementation of uniforms is something really bad and actually I see no good use in it. The only good I can see of it is really that it saves you time in the morning when choosing what to wear, and money because by using them (different outfits) a week long, everyday clothes wouldn't get so worn out and parents don't have to worry of buying a lot of clothes for school and for everyday life but for everything else I just can't stand it. I studied in schools where both policies were implemented and as a person who experienced both sides I can say that I hated to have to get up every morning and wear the same boring, ugly and unflavored clothes. I hated to look the same as everybody else and the little rules about (shoe colors, jeans colors/shape, socks and belt just wanted me to be more rebellious). I am a very calm and reasonable person, but these stupid little details just drove me crazy and I didn't understand how they could actually be helpful. I mean, you can find very bright people with green hair, piercings and orange cloth (maybe they are just peculiar, and that makes them great!). What I want to say is that it doesn't matter how you look as long as you are competitive and good at school, right? That should actually be the most important thing!!!

To summarize all the previous ideas, the implementation of school uniforms or dress codes are something that could be seen as useful but maybe it is not the best of ideas, most of all if it's thought to preserve the students' expression, creative thinking and personalities. This is greatly important considering that the people subjected to school uniforms are young people still starting to create and build their personality and conduct. However, maybe the implementation of these clothes are not that bad if they would reach a compromising point, were student wore clothes like uniforms but still could express themselves through them and just not be too rigid with the accessories, hair, piercing, tattoos and different ways of expressing peoples' personalities. These school regulators always should bear in mind that these young people still are in the process of building up a healthy mind, behavior and personalities.

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## Are They Humans or Pets?

*Cesar Augusto Idrobo-Giraldo*

*R/W 60*

Have you ever thought of how much you love your pet? Do you love him too much? do you love him enough? Or do you just feed him? Well, in fact "Americans now spend \$41 billion a year on their pets—more than the gross domestic product of all but 64 countries in the world" ("The Pet Economy," 2007, par.2). I think this says a lot about the relation between humans and animals in this country. This statistic talks by itself and for sure there is a strong relation and a different concept of pet treatment. For example, compared to western cultures, specifically the United States, eastern cultures eat several kinds of animals and have animal fighting and races as entertainment. So, with this fact we can infer how some people, not everybody because not everybody spoils their pets; give their pets an excessive treatment. This happens because of the concept of pet, and the close relation could vary from person to person. Usually the people who spend most of the money on their pets are rich people, people who are alone most of the time and people who think that animals are like humans. These could be possible causes of excessive treatment, but there could be other factors as well. Advertising, campaigns and politics make us change our mind or get involved in excessive treatment like when the people become vegetarian. This is a good example because people get another concept of animals and stop eating meat.

The main goal in this research paper is to look at some behaviors and treatments that are considered excessive. In addition, I would like to explain more specifically, excessive treatment like cloning pets in order to replace the previous ones, How people can afford health care for their pets and the doggies day care that have been created for helping owners who can keep an eye on them.

I do not want to point out anybody; I just want to show how we can love our pets and it is up to you if you consider this excessive or not, but at the end is something you were not expecting, like a pet that receives a diamond collar.

Studying human-animal relation is important because this is something that has made part of humans' lives for a long time and it has been growing and becoming more powerful. People have become more attached to their pets and have valued them until the point of spoiling. We have to be careful with this change of behavior because this is a very important factor in our social and personal lives.

One of the behaviors that I considered excessive is cloning pets. People think that with technological advance they

will get back their pets that die. What they do not realize is that they will be getting a totally different pet that may have the same physical appearance, but it will be mentally different. An example is the cloned cat named CC, who is “a genetically identical copy . . . but do not look alike, illustrating that identical twin cats may not have identical coats” (“Cloned Cat Starts . . .,” 2002, p. 1A).

For the people who are developing a new concept in science, which is cloning pets, it is a great opportunity and business to take advantage of the situation of excessive treatment that we are facing now. People are looking at animals as humans. Dr. Arthur Caplan said that cloning animals is a very profitable business. Not only has cloning become a profitable work. Thus, we clearly see how people changed the concept of pets because pets have stopped being pets. Pet owners will do everything for them like cloning and think that they will “come back” to life. However, some people are opposed to this issue of cloning pets because this is a way of contributing to the pet overpopulation problem.

The fact that cloned pets can die young and suffer because things did not work out well during the process of cloning is also questioned. Goodman, E. pointed out that “companies are happy to keep hope alive at a hefty price by harvesting, storing and cloning the DNA” (“Pet Cloning Businesses . . .,” 2002, p.11A). In short, what is happening now is that people have become more stuck to their pets; the concept of pet has changed; therefore, pets are not pets anymore. Because of that mixture of facts, the relation between pets and humans has become much stronger than 10 years ago. In addition, cloning companies are showing the people that they can bring pets back to life. Even if they say that it is reproduction and not resuscitation, but people still think that those scientists will do it. They do not realize that they will not be the same. I know it’s hard to move on when you have lost a pet that you have had for several years, but it is not a big deal. A good point that everybody should pay attention and think about it is what this person, whose name is Zhao, Y., said, “I’m going to love the next puppy too” (“Break a Leg Fluffy. . .,” 2002, p.11).

There are too many kinds of pets outside that you can even get for free. Everybody is replaceable in this life and you can make other choices. Instead of spending your money on things that really do not work and imagining that cloning will work, you’d better think twice before you do something and spend your money wisely.

Not only is cloning a problem, but pet health care also creates a problem. Now the United States is facing a problem of human healthcare because a lot of people could take benefits from this program, well known as universal healthcare, but instead of that people are giving healthcare to their “pets”. The amount of money that Americans are spending is “9.8 billion a year on Vet services. That doesn’t include the over-the-counter drugs and other supplies, which add \$9.9 billion in costs” (“The Pet Economy,” 2007, par. 15). With this statistic we get a better perspective of how Americans are spending money on things that are not priorities like their own healthcare or college education. However, what is good for some people may not be good for others and this is what Tom Carpenter, president of the

Americans Animal Hospital Assn, says: “There has been an evolution of the entire profession [veterinary services]” (“The Pet Economy,” 2007, par. 16). Looking at the fact that veterinary services are growing very fast and the mix of this with the idea of many Americans like Barbara Miers who thinks that “the issue [pet health] had parallels to human health” (“the pet economy, 2007, p. 17) will lead to an unbalanced economy. This will benefit some people who are working and developing the veterinary field; on the other hand, people who need the health care won receive it because the money invested will be focused on animals. Animals don’t have the concept or capacity to understand what we are doing, they just feel, act and react by feelings. They will not know if they have been treated by the best vet or if you take them to the best animal hospital; all they want is to be cured. I recognize that what we should do is give them the right treatment and a good care.

Finally, another treatment considered as excessive is the doggie day care. I admit that these kinds of places are good for the people who can’t keep an eye on their dogs constantly or for those who travel a lot. In fact, the services that these places have are really helpful for the owners because sometimes you can’t bring your pet to the doggie day care so they will pick him up for you. They will also take care of your pet which means they will feed him, play with him and bring him back home. Until that point everything is right because they are receiving fair treatment. In other words, they are receiving what they need and deserve in order to have a good life. However, some places have taken “Doggie Day cares” to other levels, which I fully disagree with because that is not the way pets should be treated. They don’t need HDTV’s to live; they don’t need furniture or separate bedrooms to sleep. They should be treated like animals in fair conditions, but not in “private ‘condos’ furnished with wicker furniture, pillows, framed prints and TV’s” (“A Politically Correct . . .,” 2004, p. 2B). These things are not necessary for the life of a pet. This idea of doggie day care has become a business where they make you pay more for their “services” and they show you that their pets “enjoy” staying in their private condos. This idea of treating animals as humans has been a way of fooling the person’s mind in order to consume their products and pay for their “services”. Not only are the people who have got this idea of profiting, but also the government, the city of San Francisco has a “\$7 million SPCA shelter where stray cats and dogs live” (“A Politically Correct . . .” 2004, p. 2B). The people called this the “defense of animals” which is the name of the organization behind this. I have done something similar before, but I had never touched such a high limit like sending my pets to a retirement Center where you have to pay around \$20,000 to \$25,000. What I have done is that I used to pay a person to take care of my cats when I was out of town. Usually, during vacations I did it because I did not want to leave my pets alone, so I would pay somebody to come twice a day. That person will feed them and keep an eye on them and inform me if something was going wrong with my pets or at home. That’s the most excessive treatment that my pets have received and this is responsibility because is an obligation to take care of my pets. Otherwise, I would not have taken them home. Unfortunately, other people have been doing the wrong thing; making other people pay for more services that



are not useful like a TV in their pet's "bedroom" instead of a bed in their cage where they take care of him. In short, this business of "doggie day care" has become more than a doggie day care. They offer services that they shouldn't offer. This contributes to the fact of spending money on things that are not priorities. We should be more aware of that because there are a lot of homeless people and not only in the U.S, but also around the world. Instead of spending a ridiculous amount of money on a shelter, the government should build more high schools or improve the educational system, make it more accessible for everyone so that we will work on things that we really need.

In conclusion, animal-human relationship has been always important for humans because they have found that animals can be treated as pets, and this in a way changes the life of a person. Taking care of your pet is a good form of spending your time. For example are not you satisfy when you pet is waiting for you at home? However, some people have misunderstood the concept of pet, where "pets" are not pets anymore. They have become or considered "children" for some people, so that they have been receiving an excessive treatment. People have touched such a high limit that they have cloned their pets in order to bring them back, pay an expensive healthcare, and send them to a doggie day care of the modern age. If we keep treating and spending this ridiculous amount of money on pets that don't even know that you are spending money on them and giving them gifts, the society will change the course. If this happens, animals will become a high priority, instead of healthcare or education. The numbers say it all, and they are increasing dramatically, I consider this as not good because what will happen if we invest all of our money in animals? They are not going to develop new technology or they are not going to help others like giving education. We will be wasting our money like throwing it into the bonfire. I know pets represent a new field in business, but people [pet owner] haven't known how to handle the situation and they are controlled by an idea that is completely wrong, which is treating animals as humans. If we don't control ourselves and put the things in the right place, society and economy will suffer.

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## Animal Intelligence

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R/W 60

### Abstract

Intelligence is a universal term used to describe a property of the mind that connotes many abilities related to reasoning, planning, solving problems, thinking abstractly, comprehending ideas, using language, and learning. Researchers have tried to describe this trait for animals through studies in animal behavior and animal cognition, but this issue has created a lot of conflict between scientists. However, increasingly it has been observed that different animals have different skills and features that show intelligence/cognition and what was thought as a human uniqueness is now demonstrated in different branches of the animal kingdom. Finally, maybe this perception has involved humans to pamper their "pets" in excessive and ridiculous ways, raising the question if this excessive treatment is even healthy.

According to "Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia," (2008) "The word intelligence comes from the Latin verb 'intellegere', which means 'to understand'." Throughout history intelligence has been a difficult trait to measure and standardize and many studies have been conducted on the field from the Greek Plato to American educational psychologist Jensen. Intelligence is a term that usually includes many different properties of the mind such as the capacity to reason, to plan, to solve problems, to think abstractly, to comprehend ideas, and to learn. Several ways to define intelligence include creativity, personality, character, knowledge or wisdom, but these characteristics are more subjective and are not included in the general definition of intelligence (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, 2008).

Moreover, animal intelligence or animal cognition, is known as "the modern approach to the mental capacities of animals other than humans" (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia," 2008). The mainstream thought leading to this science and knowledge comes from approaches made in the science of ethology, behavioral ecology and evolutionary psychology. This animal cognition has been developed mostly over the twentieth century and through experiments on intelligence in animals to uncover simple processes that might then help to comprehend the more complex intellectual abilities of humans (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, 2008). Its been over the last 40 years that studies intended for animals and from real animal-thinking have been carried out for primates, insects, cetaceans, parrots and dogs, discovering and unwrapping whole new boundaries in our knowledge on usual animal-minds and, therefore, creating consideration on animals-brains and the way they process and see life. Through this new research we discover that there are a lot of different animals that are high and organized thinkers; furthermore, they even show traits that genuinely surprise any expert. According to "Morell," "A whole range of animal studies now suggest that the roots of cognition are deep, widespread and highly malleable" (2008, p. 36-61).

Through this review we will get more in touch with different animals' conducts and, therefore, understand how

these days this conduct is making people feel special affinity for their animals and, therefore, a very special kind of animal pamper has been arising.

Intelligence essentially means “solving problems”. In the last few centuries and since Darwin’s discovery of evolution we can find many evolutionary studies in different types of animals; however, the interest of studying the human mind and its evolution has been very scarce, and this means that there have been few efforts to find the origins of intellect and trace its process. Some theories that try to explain human intelligence indicate that this could have occurred through climate change, change of diet, genetic mutation, different new activities (hunting, manual working, chasing, etc.) and finally the increasing social complexity (Arsuaga & Martinez, 1998)

According to Thorndike (1911, ¶ 5), in animals, “we have the simplest and at the same time the most widespread sort of intellect or learning in the world. There is no reasoning, no process of inference or comparison; there is no thinking about things, no putting two and two together; there are no ideas -- the animal does not think of the box or of the food or of the act he is to perform. He simply comes after the learning to feel like doing a certain thing under certain circumstances which before the learning he did not feel like doing. Human beings are accustomed to think of intellect as the power of having and controlling ideas and of ability to learn as synonymous with ability to have ideas. But learning by having ideas is really one of the rare and isolated events in nature. There may be a few scattered ideas possessed by the higher animals, but the common form of intelligence with them, their habitual method of learning, is not by the acquisition of ideas, but by the selection of impulses.” Animals act on impulses and instinct. But there is the question that if these vague and ordinary ways of animal-thinking could have turned (by multiple and complex associations) into the refined way of a human brain? By this argumentation it is considered that *homo sapiens* are not a new or mysterious species of intellectual life but only the natural consequences of an increase in sophisticated and intricate organization of the general animals sort (Thorndike, 1911).

In addition, and according to Thorndike (1911, ¶ 4, 7), “The basic recurring thing in animal’s brains and reactions is because an animal does learn by a process of selection; therefore, when animals are confronted with different situations they only react because of their innate nature or previous training. An animal associates a certain act with a certain felt situation and thereby they strengthen connections between certain cells. Essential animals think-feel things as a whole and so each signal is felt as a vague total of causes without (like humans) turning every single situation into a set of elements. Yet it is still considered that this way of basic and ordinary thinking and learning could have given birth, thru finesse of organization, complexity of association and evolution of cell structures, to the complex human brain. In a very short time humans have come a long way, from the simple learning and recognizing things to the science and logic of man and nowhere more truly than in his mental capacities is man a part of nature. It is believed, therefore, that humans show evident and similar traits with the lower animals, especially with our nearest evolutionary relatives, the monkeys.” Moreover, animal

cognition or animal mind is a very controversial topic among scientists around the world even if it remains common sense to most people that many other animals do have conscious experiences so, the word consciousness itself is not agreed upon its usage. Some statements concern the conscious states of the animals (what he is to himself as an inner life) and others concern his original and acquired ways of response (his behavior). Nevertheless, several useful distinctions among different types of consciousness have been made and through these distinctions people have tried to gain some clarity on this important issue (Thorndike, 1911).

Consciousness is identified as 1) the sense of consciousness when a creature is awake and 2) the sense of consciousness implicated in the basic ability of organisms to perceive-respond to different features in the environment (therefore making them conscious or aware of those features). A third notion of consciousness “access consciousness” believes that different information is broadcasted and available for higher cognitive processing tasks such as categorization, reasoning, planning and voluntary direction of attention. Two senses of consciousness in particular are very controversial between scientists: 1) phenomenal consciousness and 2) self-consciousness. Phenomenal consciousness refers to qualities, subjective, phenomenal aspects. It refers to the capacity to describe or imagine. This kind of consciousness has been agreed to be more in mammals and birds. Whereas self-consciousness refers to an organism’s capacity for second-order representation of the organism’s own mental states and this means theory of mind whether an animal is capable of attributing mental states to others (Stanford Encyclopedia of Psychology, 2006).

For most people, their pets seem very conscious and probably they would point out similarities between their animals and humans’ behavior. But actually animal consciousness refers to commonsense observations, investigations in behavior and neurology as well as evolutionary homology between species. Therefore reactions of many animals, particularly in other mammals, to a range of events like high-pitch vocalizations, fear responses, nursing for injuries and pain responses are part of the mammalian heritage and believed as animal consciousness. And even scientific demonstrations of members of other species (even of other phyla) are susceptible to the same visual illusions as we are (Fujita *et al.*, 1991).

If compensating for small sets of neurons is not a valid function for consciousness, what might be? The commonsensical answer would be that consciousness “tells” the organism about events in the environment, or, in the case of pain and other sensations about the state of the body. Opponents of attributing the phenomenal consciousness to animals are not committed to denying the more general kind of consciousness of various external and bodily events, so there is no logical entailment from awareness of things in the environment or the body to animal sentience. Povinelli & Giambone (2000) also argue that the argument from analogy fails because superficial observation of quite similar behaviors even in closely related species does not guarantee that the underlying cognitive principles are the same, a point that Povinelli believes is

demonstrated by his research into how chimpanzees use cues to track visual attention.

Once upon a time animals were thought to be only like automatons and believing that animals could actually think was very fanciful. The field observations, their study on the laboratory white rat, turned into studying behaviorism, which regarded animals as machines. But certain skills are considered key signs of higher mental abilities: good memory, a little knowledge of grammar and symbols, self-awareness, understanding others' motives, imitating others, and being creative. And little by little these abilities (what we thought made humans beings distinctive) are shifting and other species are being considered with these capabilities, too. It is probable to say that animals need to distinguish colors, categorize things, distinguish shapes and keep track of the concept of numbers. And throughout this we can state that on the evolution of human intelligence must have, like the rest of our physiology came from simple organisms, since all animals face the same general challenges of life (find a mate, food). Thereby, problem solving categorizing abilities are required. This no longer is only attributable to primate species closer to the humans species and as an example we can consider the border collie named "Rico", who is a pure example of fast learning abilities skills and knowing that acoustic patterns (Rico has a vast vocabulary of two hundred words and can understand grammar structure. He can learn a word after one exposure to that word). According to Kaminski, "Dogs' understanding of human forms of communication is something new that's developed in them because of their long association with humans" (Kaminski *cited by* Morell, 2008).

We also can find these kinds of exceptional behaviors in some species of birds (ex. parrots or crows). Therefore, we can see that in the case of evolution (and because our common ancestor with birds is very far away) we can see that evolution can invent similar forms of advanced intelligence more than once and that this ability is not only reserved for primates or mammals. These birds, as chimpanzees, are able to produce tools for their benefit and, therefore, researchers can look for similarities in the evolutionary process that shaped the brain of both of these species. It is thought that the environments of both these species favored the tool-making neural abilities. Research also demonstrates that that some birds encompass the ability to recall a specific past event, or "episodic memory." As a result, the idea that we are the only contemplating intelligence throughout the animal kingdom is obsolete and now we can find that this ability (only thought in primates) is now a bush and not a single-trunk tree with a line leading only to us.

In other order of ideas, these days we tend to recognize traits of intelligence and animal consciousness more and more and translate this conduct in our beloved "pets." We owners always think that our special friends are intelligent, unique and extraordinary in some certain way and this is why now we can find so many "crazy" organizations and companies created to assure a good and better life for our special furry fiends. Therefore, in the present time we can locate special health care centers, particular and very expensive food, trust funds to assure our pets life after we are gone, luxurious retirements, travel accommodations or even spa treatments. We people treat our

pets like our little children and buy anything we feel would produce in them a certain kind of wellness or happiness, and we buy for them jewelry "bling-bling", clothes, expensive carry bags or in some cases even an airplane to guarantee they can always visit us in any part of the world we are. These pet lovers perceive themselves as mother's or father's and look for creating a relationship with their pet based on community, friendship and personal identity, in other words they anthropomorphize their relationship with their dogs by engaging in this family new/shifted relationship (Greenbaum, 2004). Also according to Greenbaum (2004, ¶ 11), "The marketplace has responded to this change by producing luxury goods for people to be generous to their pets. While companies filled the gap in the marketplace, they simultaneously created new needs for consumption as a way for individuals to express love for their pets. Today, consumers can watch television channels devoted to animals, send their dog to a pet psychic, bring their dog to doggie daycare, or hire a dog walker so the family pooch does not have to be alone while the family is away. This research suggests that dogs have become child substitutes." This is the new trend of the last decade and even though it is shown that animals are not just machines or laboratory instruments it is not very sure if the excessive spoiling is something comprehensible/logical or just an anthropomorphic craziness. And maybe the marketplace is just using this crazy spoiling and pampering towards ours pets and is playing with our money until leaving us in bankruptcy.

It is sure that all pet owners will agree that their pets are special and intelligent but is this conduct actually healthy or logical? As we have seen before, different animals are now bringing to life many questions about their consciousness and general intelligence that were previously thought only in human evolution, but is the human ability of humanizing every animal-intelligent trait healthy? Maybe not! Not for us and not for the animals called "pet"! Our society seems to treat pets more and more like children. Do you really need to go out and continuously buy your pet the latest and greatest pet toy or bed to be happy? Treating pets as children or little humans can and will create problems in your household (Brown, 2006). It is true we have established deep bonds with them and maybe this can come throughout the childlike charm they own that automatically makes us feel affinity for them. And an extreme thinking is that with pets there is neither heartbreak nor deception and humans find such locality irresistible (Weintraub, 2007). But this great love may not be very healthy for us because it only helps make us comfortable in our little world and helps us to get more and more isolated with no need for contact with other human beings. And for the "pets" too, because even though they are treated as kings (and as we became irrational consumers) they don't really need the extreme luxury given by the anthropomorphic view of life and continuing overindulgence may only lead our pets to further problems in their conduct, behavior or even in their physiology. Consequently, by elevating the dogs to the status of children they can get confused too and the dog owner status becomes elevated to parent and, therefore, creating a form of "impression management" (Goffman, 1959) and as a result, confusion and mixture between both sides of this relationship will arise. But it

is true animals are not the lifeless things and machines thought in earlier times and the trait of animal intelligence is now seen and demonstrated in many different organisms and not only to the *anthropo* family. If consciousness is found and what kind of stages are perceived is still something very debatable, in fact this issue is not agreed upon in the scientific community, but one is for sure, intelligence is there! Amazingly it is found in different animals through worms to dolphins and of course chimpanzees. It can be that this trait now recognized and shown by animals may have confused humans these days. Solitary, isolated humans, who just feel lonely and are not capable of establishing healthy human bonds therefore, this excessive treatment is observed more and more these days. Being driven to some crazy behaviors which is not well understood in all countries/cultures/societies of the world since there are many other worries that certainly need more of this charity, positive feelings, love, time, that are invested in spoiling our pets in these “unexplainable” ways. Also, in a very “we are part of all” way of thinking, if we are capable of producing this good feeling, if we are able of feeling this good energy, then why not turn it to ourselves, because we all exist on the same planet and maybe we should turn it into good actions towards our globe or our own environment.

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