

## Instructions:

Make a new Google doc titled LastName\_FirstName-Lyrical Essay. Share it with english@freestyleacademy.rocks and upload the URL to the Canvas assignment. Since we did not have class last week due to Senior presentations, you may use the class period today to prepare your draft for feedback (and we will also review how to do the footnotes). I need as complete of a draft as possible by this due date in order to give you feedback and an initial assessment prior to the Lyrical Essay Celebration days (in-class recitations on Wed. May 29 and Mon. June 1).

You may still make adjustments to the Lyrical Essay (Project Outcome) and resubmit it by the end of the second-to-last day of the semester (Wed. June 5) for an adjusted grade.

**All other English work** for the semester may be (re)submitted by the Final Call Deadline of Thurs., May 23, Exhibition Day. All grades in the gradebook — except the Lyrical Essay (Project Outcome) — will be final after I collect and reassess final submissions submitted by midnight on Thurs., May 23.

Please review the [Guidelines and Rubric](#)

Reminder: Your lyrical essay document should contain the following elements, in the following order:

- I. Creative title with by-line underneath
- II. Lyrical Essay text w/at least 3 sources footnoted in Chicago NB format
- III. Annotated Bibliography
- IV. Rubric (copy, paste, and self-evaluate by highlighting a level in each category which accurately reflects the quality of your work).

### ***Rubric for the Lyrical Essay (12 points possible):***

	<b>Excellent (3 points)</b>	<b>Satisfactory, but needs some improvement (2 points)</b>	<b>Partially complete/ needs significant improvement (1 point)</b>
<b>Focus</b>	Purpose of the lyrical essay is clear and compelling. Writer represents the complexity of the	Purpose of the lyrical essay is clear but could be more compelling. The writer could be more	Purpose of the lyrical essay is unclear. Or, the essay represents the subject too simply, neglecting

	subject perceptively, reflecting deep, sensitive, and sustained thinking.	perceptive in their representation of the subject and its complexity.	complexity.
<b>Style</b>	The writer employs a variety of stylistic techniques (poetic devices, narrative perspective, varied prose forms) to challenge the reader to interpret meaning and shape the reading experience. Metaphors are fresh, original, and apt representations of the subject matter.	The writer employs several recognizable stylistic techniques but could do more stylistically to challenge the reader and shape the reading experience. Apt metaphors are present, but could be more specific or original.	The writer is fairly one-dimensional in their application of stylistic techniques. Or, metaphors fall into cliché territory.
<b>Research</b>	Writer uses accurate <a href="#">Chicago-style NB footnote format</a> , indicating clearly at least 3 research sources in the text. Annotated bibliography follows proper format and conveys insight into the writer's thinking about the value and purpose of each source (describe, evaluate, and explain why/how it is relevant to your lyrical essay). See <a href="#">here</a> for guide.	Chicago-style footnote format has some errors. Writer indicates 3 research sources in the text. Or, annotated bibliography has some errors or does not include all required elements for each source (describe, evaluate, and explain why/how it is relevant to your lyrical essay).	Chicago-style footnote format is missing, or, writer does not cite 3 sources in the text. Or, annotated bibliography is incomplete.
<b>Mechanics</b>	The text is free from errors of spelling, grammar, and punctuation. From a mechanics standpoint, this essay is ready for publication.	The text contains some errors. These errors do not impact the reader's ability to comprehend material. One more round of editing/polishing is necessary.	The text contains some significant errors. These errors affect the reader's ability to understand the material in some places.

## To-dos:

- Revise Annotated bibliography about sources
- Revise - stylistic techniques, maybe personal elements, subjects of essay, clearer purpose for the essay
- Creative title with a byline
- Rubric self-evaluation

## Sources:

-<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/05/08/us/rfk-jr-brain-health-memory-loss.html>

-[national geographic](#)

-[CDC](#)

-[Britannica](#)

- cdc ameoba <https://www.cdc.gov/naegleria/about/index.html>

-national library of medicine leg worm <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3018580/>

- NIH tapeworm

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK537154/#:~:text=The%20first%20type%20is%20cause%20d.system%2C%20this%20is%20called%20neurocysticercosis.>

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## Rough draft:

## Socialis Parasitus

What is a parasite? Perhaps you have heard the word recently, maybe, read an article in which presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy Jr. explained how a worm had eaten through part of his brain. The article describes how the abnormality seen on scans of RFK Junior's brain, "was caused by a worm that got into (his) brain and ate a portion of it and then died"<sup>1</sup>. After furthering your knowledge of the peculiar situation (all the better to discuss the absurdity of the US government's current state with your close friends), you learn that the parasite had caused both long-term and short-term memory loss, but that Kennedy Junior claimed to have recovered, stating that he had retained no lasting impairment due to the infestation. Apparently, after revealing that information to the public, Kennedy declared on his "X"<sup>2</sup> account, "I offer to eat 5 more brain worms and still beat President Trump and President Biden in a debate... I feel confident in the result even with a six-worm handicap." You put the article out of your mind, somewhat disturbed. Whether the sticky sensation in your larynx was caused by the idea of a parasitic worm nestled within neural tissue, or by the churlish old men vying for leadership of your country, you can't seem to tell.

After you get over the slimy discomfort that comes with the topic of parasites, it's easy enough to give a general description of them; "Oh! It's an animal that leeches off of a different one! Like a tick, or a tapeworm!" But then, what makes a parasitic relationship different from, say, a relationship between predator and prey? Both involve one animal eating another, right? According to National Geographic, "In parasitism, one species (the parasite) lives with, on, or in a host species, at the expense of the host species. Unlike in predation, the host is not immediately killed by the parasite, though it may sicken and die over time"<sup>3</sup>.

Yeesh. How morbid. Nothing quite like a long, slow, and likely painful death, right? And there are so many more parasites than you think there are. So many revolting little creepy crawlies that your family would despise you for, should you bring them up at the dinner table. "Hey, did you know that scientists recently discovered that there can be brain-eating amoebas in pool water?"<sup>4</sup> or, "So, I was reading this article where a lady got a foot-long worm pulled out of her leg. It had been living in there for five years, isn't that crazy!"<sup>5</sup> Yes, you might receive quite a few glowers for imparting that wonderful

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<sup>1</sup> Susanne Craig, "R.F.K. Jr. Says Doctors Found a Dead Worm in His Brain," The New York Times, published May 8, 2024, <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/05/08/us/rfk-jr-brain-health-memory-loss.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Craig, Susanne

<sup>3</sup> "Symbiosis: The Art of Living Together," National Geographic, last accessed May 21, 2024, <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/symbiosis-art-living-together/>

<sup>4</sup> "About Naegleria Fowleri Infection," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, last modified may 15, 2024, <https://www.cdc.gov/naegleria/about/index.html>

<sup>5</sup> Kyung-Joon Lee, Na-Hye Myung, and Hyun-Woo Park, "A Case of Sparganosis in the Leg," National Library of Medicine, published online Dec 16, 2010, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3018580/>

information while the person sitting across from you is halfway through their stir-fried noodles. They may even push their plate away, unable to finish the meal due to the heaving roil of their own stomach.

Parasites have a unique way of raising this sickening, terrified, ab-so-lutely disgusting feeling within you. Your skin begins to tingle at the thought of that horrid, pale, *thing* squirming about inside you. It's unbearable to even stare at a picture of one for too long. They may even haunt your nightmares, plague you by taking the form of dark shapes in the night, looming over your bed. Giant worms with hooks in their sucker-like mouths. You might refuse to drink water that's not from a bottle, avoid leaving the house without shoes and long pants, for fear of a blood-sucker's wandering proboscis. You may rely heavily on cleaning products, always wash your hands with soap, avoid touching things that may be, god forbid, *dirty*.

Maybe, if you do all of this, it will keep you safe from any wriggling hairworms, bloated ticks, putrid mosquitos, from anything that seeks to invade your body, burrow deep under your skin. However, it is my deepest regret to inform you.

You have failed.

You are infested with a parasite that constantly weakens you. Your symptoms, I see them every time I look at old pictures of your pre-teen self. You sleep enough, but you remain constantly fatigued. You consume what you're told is healthy, and yet you feel like throwing it all back up. You have attained achievement after award after accomplishment, and still you remain unfulfilled.

You, my friend, have a parasite. And no amount of hand-washing, paranoia, medications, or desperate measures can get rid of it. This parasite, it's not like any of the ones I have described before. It doesn't have any hooks or suckers, it's not hairy or slimy. It won't cause swelling, won't force your frantic immune system to burn it out no matter the cost.

You're not even aware of it. This intangible worm, despite not having a physical manifestation, still manages to hide the havoc it wreaks upon you. It thrives, right under your nose. The thing has ingrained itself so deep in your psyche that I can't even tell what parts of yourself are yours and what parts belong to the infection.

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This parasite has been with you since birth. Dormant, until that day you began to doubt your place in the world, your confidence and blissful ignorance. Middle school, maybe? Perhaps even earlier. It's the reason you are so terrified of raising your hand in class, the reason you flinch when someone asks you a question. It's the reason you're always taking on more work, the reason you don't care how that affects your own health. It's the reason you burnt out, the reason you hate being alone, the reason you gave up, the reason you don't have the will to begin the self-destructive cycle once again.

When you were a child, people told you what to do, what would supposedly make you successful in life and what would cause failure. How to improve, what to do better.

*The host unwittingly ingests the parasite's egg.*

You grew older, you tried to fit in while simultaneously standing out. You tried to become so many contradicting ideas that you began to lose yourself. Your life became a self-imposed competition with everyone around you.

*The eggs hatch, releasing fully formed larvae into the host's circulatory system.*

After attempting to fulfill lifelong expectations of good grades, perfect features, and a glowing personality, you are reaching your limits. Nothing ever feels like an accomplishment anymore. Only like meeting an expectation.

*After further development, the larva encysts within one of the host's major organs.*

There's nothing good that lies ahead, you think, and life has lost its color. You can't see a future through the fog of fatigue and shadows obscuring your vision.

*Mass lesions form in subcutaneous tissue or muscle. Additional symptoms may stem from cystic hydatid disease or alveolar disease.*

People tell you that you need help, should start seeing someone. But there is nothing physically wrong with you. Nothing shows up on the MRIs or CT scans, not even on the sleep study they did to screen for Narcolepsy, of all things.

*Adult tapeworm infections are best diagnosed by identifying eggs or gravid proglottid segments in stool<sup>6</sup>.*

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<sup>6</sup> Ellen J. Lesh, Mark F. Brady, "Tapeworm," National Library of Medicine, last modified August 28, 2023, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK537154/#:~:text=The%20first%20type%20is%20caused,system%2C%20this%20is%20called%20neurocysticercosis>

Every specialist wants to give you their own selfish diagnosis, but none of them ever come close to figuring out what went wrong with the development of your neurotransmitters and dendrites. But you think that in the end, there's no brain tumor or neurological disease causing the problem. Nothing their numerous prescriptions can "help" with. It's something you have to fix yourself.

*Some extraintestinal infections respond to anthelmintic treatment with albendazole and/or praziquantel; others require surgical intervention<sup>7</sup>.*

You began the long journey of clawing your way back to life, slipping over and over again as your efforts refused to gain traction. Recovery is always uglier than you expect, full of scar tissue and callouses. But nothing is worth more than when you finally begin to grasp the ragged edges of the hole in the floor that collapsed under you.

*If there are no further complications in regards to the operation, the patient's recovery time can range from a few weeks to several months<sup>8</sup>.*

You pull yourself up and out. Standing on solid ground once again. You have reclaimed your life, made it your own once more. The only things you need to shove down your throat at night now are fruit-flavored melatonin gummies.

*When the patient is deemed fully recovered, they may resume activities as normal.*

You pulled that wretched parasite out of yourself, inch by agonizing inch. Never again, you say to yourself. Never again.

And you, you are a lucky one. You are whole once again, but your heart still tugs at the mention of another victim. Those who were not so fortunate as you.

Try as you might, you will never be able to ignore the silent cries, the tired eyes, begging for someone to look a little deeper, to see the sickening creature buried underneath their skin.

A final note; take great care that you, dear reader, never fall prey to Socialis Parasitus, the Societal Parasite.

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<sup>7</sup> Lesh, Ellen, and Brady, Mark

<sup>8</sup> Lesh, Ellen, and Brady, Mark

### 1. CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) “About Parasites”

I believe that the value of this source lies in its breakdown of the three different types of parasites, and what characteristics separate them. This gave me lots of ideas for what specific characteristics I could compare to my societal issue to further enhance the metaphor I want to create. It also focuses on the danger of parasites to humans as a disease/health risk, which is helpful to me because I want to use them as a metaphor for something that harms humans. I chose this source to get a better understanding of how parasites affect humans, so that I won't state untrue facts when writing about them.

### 2. National Geographic “Symbiosis: The Art of Living Together”

I liked this source because it explored alternative relationships between organisms that aren't necessarily parasitic in addition to the parasitic ones. This helped me isolate the factors of parasitic relationships that I wanted to focus on, and aided me in choosing what social issue to focus on. Compared to other relationships like competition and predation, parasites are a particularly gruesome concept because they don't immediately kill their host, but the eventual death is a long and painful one. This reminded me of how some negative societal values can be ingrained in people since birth, and cause them problems later in life because the toxic values society imposed upon them when they were naive and impressionable had become indistinguishable from their own core values/beliefs as a person.

### 3. Encyclopedia Britannica “Social Issue”

This source was very helpful because it gave me lots of context and ideas for social issues. It gave me a large list of all different types of social issues that I would not have

been able to come up with on my own, and gave me context about some of the discourse involving what constitutes as a social issue or not. I liked how despite the fact that each issue had different physical and mental effects, each stemmed from some negative aspect of human nature, like obsession, hatred, fear, greed, etc. For example, global warming is very different from sexual assault, but both stem from the human characteristic of greed (Global warming was formed because people continued to sell oil/fossil fuels for money, despite the damage to the environment. Sexual assault exemplifies greed because it involves taking from and hurting another for pleasure, without concern for how the victim is affected.) All in all, this source was extremely valuable for understanding how varied and muddied social issues are, in addition to providing inspiration for what parasites resemble which social issues.