

## Editor's Welcome

Welcome to The ESL Writers' Review! The ESL Writers' Review showcases writing by and for the ESL community at Grossmont College. All of the contributions are written by students in the ESL and ACE programs, and represent the authors' original work with light editing. These students come to Grossmont from all over the world and are in different class levels. Some of the contributors are currently learning sentence-level grammar in their first-ever English language classes, while others are preparing to complete their ESL sequence and continue on with their majors. What they all have in common is their commitment to learning English in order to help them succeed, their bravery in submitting their work for the ESL community to read, and their understanding that mistakes are great opportunities for learning!

In this issue, you will read letters, paragraphs, and essays that show how our writers' hard work to become skilled writers of English is paying off!

Maybe one of our next issue's writers could be you! Submissions from all levels—no matter how short or long—and on any topic are, in any written format you choose. Pictures are also welcome.

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## My Special Possession

by Samar Hesa  
ESL 71, Instructor Kimberly Johnson

I have a special possession. It's a camera. It's new and very small. It's a very good camera. I take pictures of my friends and family. I love my camera because my family gave it to me.

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## My Special Possession

by Delon Noah  
ESL 71, Instructor Kimberly Johnson

I have a special possession. It's a chain. It's small and fifteen years old. It's long and silver. It's special because my father gave it to me seven years ago.

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## My Special Possession

by Nadera Shamasha  
ESL 71, Instructor Kimberly Johnson

I have a special possession. It's a ring. It's small and beautiful. It's gold and has an expensive stone. It's special because my sons gave it to me seven years ago.

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## My Wedding Day

by Marwah Agmayah  
ESL 96, Instructor Mickie Donan

My wedding event was the most perfect day for me. I looked so beautiful with my white dress. I wore the white dress along with a long veil. Also, my jewelry and my shoes were shining. I had six groomsmen and bridesmaids. The bridesmaids' dresses were long and had a special color (pink). The whole hall was filled with flowers, and the decoration was the same as the bridesmaids' dress color. All my friends, relatives, and friends celebrated this special event with me. This event can never be forgotten because everything was perfect.

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## Big Change for Me

by Eman Al Wardi  
ESL 96, Instructor Mickie Donan

An important event in my life was when I came to the U.S.A. I arrived at Los Angeles Airport on April 17, 2014. The day was important to me because my whole life changed. For example, I had to leave my husband behind in Syria. Also, now this time I had to learn a new language. And English is a very difficult language. Finally, I had to live in a brand new culture. For example, I had to get a job. In conclusion, my life changed a lot when I came to the U.S.A.

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## An Unforgettable Day

by Felix Bautista  
ESL 96, Instructor Mickie Donan

The birth of my daughter was a special day for me. She was born on September 4, 1983. That day I was very surprised. I was expecting a boy, but I had a girl. I went to the hospital to see her, but

I was very nervous. First, when I saw my wife I hugged and kissed her. Next, I asked her if everything was OK with the baby. She said that the baby was healthy. Then, the nurse brought my daughter to the room, I took her in my arms, I cried and kissed my baby. I thought, she is part of my life now. My expectations for a boy disappeared the minute that I had my baby in my arms. Later, the family for both sides came to see my daughter. They brought presents, ballons and flowers. Finally, I was happy to have a child, it didn't matter if it was a boy or girl. The birth of my daughter changed my life forever.

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## My Important Day

by Muna Gedow

ESL 96, Instructor Mickie Donan

An important day in my life was the day my first baby was born. It was an important day in my life because I was to become a mother. It was Monday, February 9, 2009. I had my first baby. He was a boy. His name was Elmi. I waited for nine months. When he came out, I was excited. I couldn't believe I had a baby. Finally, I got a beautiful boy. I will never forget that day in my life, and I love him so much.

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## An Important Event in My Life

by Adnan Khummi

ESL 96, Instructor Mickie Donan

The most important event in my life was in July 2012 when I came to the United States. I was excited to see this country because this was my first step into my dream land. It was very important for me because I need the safety and freedom. Also I was tired of so much violence in my country, Iraq. Then I was happy when I saw my brothers and my friends in a free country. It was a new feeling born inside. That day was a special event because it was the first day of my life in the USA.

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## The Day that I Got My Driver's License

by Doraïd Shorez

ESL 96, Instructor Mickie Donan

It was the 2<sup>nd</sup> time to take my driver's test. I failed the first time because I was not prepared. So I prepared myself for the test. The week before I was training and practicing so hard. I really wanted to pass my test. On Tuesday night, I prepared my permit and my insurance document and I made sure it was not expired and I filled the car with gas and called my brother to

make sure he was coming to pick me up. The next day, I woke up at 7am. It was Wednesday, my appointment was at 11am. My brother came to pick me up at 9:30am. We arrived at 10:08am at the DMV. I went inside to check in and I was told to wait in the car in the line and someone will be with you. I was nervous, so I started to smoke a cigarette. Then a gentleman knocked on my window. I asked him if he was the instructor, and he said yes, are you ready? I told him I had been ready since yesterday. I took the test and passed. I was very excited because I didn't need anyone to drive me around anymore. I went inside, got my photo taken, and got my driver's license in my hand and walked outside of the building and looked for my brother. Finally I went home. I was so happy that day.

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## Life in Iraq and the U.S.

by Kawther Alghanimi

ESL 100, Instructor Sara Ferguson

Iraq and the U.S are two different countries, and the life in these countries is very different from each other in freedom, families, and food. Here in America, you find the people have more freedom and rights than Iraq. In America, you can express your feelings or your opinions towards basically anything and have no consequences, while in Iraq, you have some freedom but if you express your feelings towards something sensitive, you might have many consequences which could include death. Another difference is families. Most families are big in Iraq. People get attached to their children a lot. You might see a 30 year old man who is married and still lives with his parents and wife which is totally fine because in Iraq, the families are very attached unlike here where you see a 20 years old living alone. Families here are not so attached. Another difference is the food. The food is a huge part of the Arabic culture in general and Iraqi specifically. We mostly eat homemade in Iraq, and it is a way of showing hospitality and it contains a lot of meat and vegetables. However in America people eat a lot of fast food in restaurants. In sum, there are many differences in life between Iraq and America.

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## Life in My Country and the U.S.

by *Sinan Adham*  
ESL 100, Instructor Sara Ferguson

Life is different from country to country. People from all domains of life are living in various situations and enormous circumstances. There are many differences between the life in my country and the in U.S in many virtues, such as job, traffic, and security situation. First, life is hard in both countries, so people need to work. However, the work in my country is easier than the work in the U.S. For example, my dad was working in Iraq, and he felt that the job in our country was easier than the job that he has right now in U.S. My dad was an accountant in Iraqi National Bank, which is very large and famous bank in my country. My dad felt happy and comfortable while he was working in Iraq. The business hours in my country are less than U.S, so my father was working for few hours with the same salary. Also the bank policy in Iraq is easier than in the U.S. For example, my father spent most of his time sitting in a chair while he was working and dealing. However, the job in my country is easier than in the U.S. My dad works an accountant too in Chase bank, which is also a famous bank in the U.S. My father is feeling tired and uncomfortable right now in the U.S. The business hours in the U.S are more than Iraq. My father is working right now for too many hours with the same wages. The policy in the U.S. is harder than in my country, and he is not able to sit in a chair while he's working. Second, both countries have a lot of traffic. The traffic in my country is horrible. There are too many check points and the roads are old, narrow, and cracked. There is no specific rules that control the traffic. The streets are not lined. There is no specific speed limits in the streets. However, the U.S. has a lot of traffic, but U.S has organized streets, so people can reach the destination easily and readily. The freeway makes the people drive easier than the people who drive in Iraq. In

addition, the new and advanced services such as the trolley and the subway are very essential and helpful to reduce the amount of traffic jams and make people feel more comfortable and relaxed. Finally, the security is the most important differences between my country and U.S. Unfortunately my country is suffering from security unrest. For example terrorists and extremists have made negative and bad effects on my country. Those bad individuals made Iraqi people feel unsafe and anxious most of the time. Conversely, life in the U.S. is safer and more stable than in Iraq. Indeed, the people in the U.S. have the peace available. That makes them live comfortably and encourages them to live a meaningful life. Those are the differences in my country and the U.S. In short, jobs, traffic, and the security situation are the main differences between my country and U.S.

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## Differences between My Country Iraq and the USA

by *Fatin Alsaraf*  
ESL 100, Instructor Sara Ferguson

There are many differences between my country and the USA such as the women's roles, education, and family relationship. First of all the important difference is women's roles. For example most women in Iraq are not allowed to work in military or police fields, but in the USA the women can work in all fields. The second difference is education. In Iraq there is limited time. After high school students have to go to college immediately. If they don't go they will lose the opportunity to complete their education, but in the USA students can decide to complete their education at any time they want. For example one time I attended a graduation party at Grossmont College. One student's age was 70 years old. The third difference is family relationship in Iraq. For example sons and daughters live with their parents. Even after they get married they live together as a big family, but in the USA children live with parents until they reach 18 years old. In the end there are many differences between Iraq and USA culture in women's roles, education, and family relationship.

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## The Difference between Life in My Country and the U.S.

by *Rana Asaad*  
ESL 100, Instructor Sara Ferguson

There are many differences between life in my country, Iraq, and The United States, including community, food, and law. First, Iraqi people are more social than American people, so they are used to visiting their relatives and friends and going out on week days, but in

the U.S people only visit and go out on the weekend. Second, the American people depend on fast food and they always require it because they are busy all day, so that helps them to save time. Iraqi people eat slow food and they like to cook and eat at home. Finally, traffic laws in the U.S are organized and coordinated more than traffic laws in Iraq, and this helps reduce accidents, but in Iraq people don't follow the law, and it causes accidents and traffic jams. In sum, there are many different things between Iraq and U.S in culture, people, education, and nutrition.

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## The Different Life in My Country and United States

by *Rawnaq Banyameen*  
ESL 100, Instructor Sara Ferguson

We can see the different life in all of the world, but there are many differences in my country and United states. First is the different in education. The education in my country is free but in the United States it's not. It's easy to go to college in the United States but not easy to finish your education. In my country it's not easy to go to college but it's easy to finish it. The second different is the rent and taxes. There is no tax return in my country, and the rent in the United states is too expensive but in my country is not. Finally the differences between the two countries in customs and tradition, one of these differences in my country is the girl cannot leave her dad house until she married. The life is completely different in those two countries so we must get used to life as it is with the changes.

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## My Beautiful Twin Sister

by *Lina Fuad*  
ESL 100, Instructor Mimi Pollack



My twin sister is a combination of good and bad qualities. Lara is my twin sister, we are so close to each other. First of all, I will start with her good qualities. Lara is very helpful. When I ask her for help, she does not refuse. If anyone asks for

help, she will always be helpful to them. For example, when we were in high school before every exam, all our friends came to ask her to explain to them what they did not understand. She helped them all with pleasure. Furthermore, she is so funny. I enjoy it when our family hangs out. She likes to make humorous jokes and we all laugh. However, she has bad qualities that annoy me. She is very lazy especially during the holidays. She spends a lot of time searching on the internet without doing any chores. One day I told her to wash the dishes. When I saw her after two hours, she was sitting in the same position as she was before. Then, I asked her, "Did you see the dishes?" she answered that she did not even go to look at them. In addition, she takes a lot of time to do things. For example, when I go shopping with her, it always takes her at least five hours. She is so picky. One day she wanted a Tshirt, so I went with her to the mall. She checked out almost all the stores in the mall til she found what she wanted. She compared between all of them to make sure which one was the cutest. Finally, nobody is perfect, but I love my twin sister and she is the closest one to me in my family.

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## Differences of Two Countries

by *Sohal Huseini*  
ESL 100, Instructor Sara Ferguson

The three differences of my life in my country Afghanistan and United States are education, respect for women, and free time. In my country, it is very hard to go to school and study. People do not feel safe because of the bad situation due to war. However, here in the United States people can go to college and study because the government pays so people can go to school. Another difference between my country and the United States is respect for women. In Afghanistan, people do not have respect for women like they



have respect here in the United States. Women and men are not equal in Afghanistan because women cannot work or study and go out; because men think it's not good for a woman. The other difference is the people in my country have a lot of free time and have fun because people are not busy. But here in United States, people are very busy with school and work and do not have a lot of free time. In summary, life is difficult in Afghanistan because of war, no education and bad situation for women. However, life in the United States is good because of good education and work, and also women and men have freedom.

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## Ways of Living in Two Different Countries

by Lina Jalo

ESL 100, Instructor Sara Ferguson

There are several differences between my life in Iraq and my life in the U.S.A. First is my living style. My family and I were living in a big house with a nice garden. Now, we are living in a small apartment without a beautiful garden. Second is working. I used to work in a businesses company. My position was a secretary, and I have good experience in this field. Now, in U.S.A, I am student at Grossmont College and I study English because am planning to get a job in the future. Finally, it's a nice dream to live in a country like the U.S.A, especially if you are looking for freedom. Sometime I miss my life there, but when I think about the freedom I have in the U.S.A I feel happy and blessed.

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## Life in United States vs. Kurdistan

by Zhala Tawfique

ESL 100, Instructor Sara Ferguson

Living in two different countries can be challenging. Life is different in the United States and Kurdistan. There are three main different life styles between those two countries. First in the United States, parents

are more involved in their children's life at a very young age. At 18 years a person is considered an adult and moves out of their parent's home and starts their life. In Kurdistan children are ignored and rely on their parents until they get married. Second in United States women have more freedom and they are treated equal, but in Kurdistan women depend on their parents or husband after she get married. Third in United States education is open to all people if they want but in Kurdistan you have to take a placement test, also you have to get a higher grade, to see if you can go to college or University. In conclusion we can say life in the United States gives you more opportunity and freedom than Kurdistan.

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## Differences Between Life in Iraq and Life in the U.S.A.

by Dalya Sawa

ESL 100, Instructor Sara Ferguson

There are many differences between life in Iraq and life in the U.S.A, but cost of life, tradition, and rules are the most important differences between these countries. The first difference is cost of life. The cost of life is cheaper than the U.S.A. For example, the rent in Iraq is cheaper than the rent in the United States. Therefore, in Iraq one person in a family can work and pay for the rent and utilities. However, in the U.S.A. one person cannot pay rent by himself because it is very expensive, so we can see both parents working to pay the rent. The second difference is traditions. The traditions are very different between Iraq and the U.S.A. For example, in Iraq many couples after getting married live with their parents, but in the U.S.A after getting married, they live in their own house. Also, in Iraq a new family decides to have many children in the future such as more than four children, but in the U.S.A they don't have more than 2 or three children. In addition, in Iraq women can't have any jobs compared to the U.S.A. In other words, women don't have freedom to do what they want to do. However, in the U.S.A. it is very easy for women to get the job they want. The third and most important difference is rules. The rules between Iraq and the U.S.A are very different. For example, in Iraq people can drive without seatbelts and without car insurance, but in the U.S.A., we must wear seatbelts and pay for car insurance. Also in Iraq you can decide if you want to go to middle school and high school, but still have to go to elementary school. However, in the U.S.A., you are required to go to school until you finish high school. In conclusion, all these important differences change the way we live in Iraq and the U.S.A.

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## The Differences Between Two Countries

by Rana Shandal  
ESL 100, Instructor Sara Ferguson

There are many general life differences between my country, Iraq, and the United States. The top three, most important differences are education, laws, and freedom. First of all, men and women in Iraq have to help their families with income. This being said, men cannot continue their higher education because they do not have enough money and they need to work and help their families. Also, women cannot continue their education because they do not have enough money, and they cannot go to school alone because it is dangerous for them. This is due to the terrorism that there is in Iraq; if terrorists see a girl walking by herself in the streets, they would kidnap her. On the other hand, however, people in the United States continue their education without having to worry about financial expenses because most of them receive financial aid. Second of all, laws in Iraq are very unorganized. The police and courts do not care about people's problems. For example, many of the drivers do not have driver licenses. Also, the government does not care about people when they are at the hospitals. There is no medical provided for low income families. In the United States, many low income people have medical insurance, which helps them with their health. Everybody has to follow the rules in order to be safe. Third of all, freedom in Iraq is never valued. Men and women are not equal. Men can work and drive, but women cannot. Men are always favored over women because men are considered the breadwinners. In the United States, men and women are equal with every little detail. Men and women can work and earn the same amount of money. They can drive at the same age, get educated, and vote as well. Finally, the life in Iraq and the United States is very uneven.

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## My Son's Behavior at Home

by Raad Akko  
ESL 103, Instructor Mimi Pollack

My son is combination of good and bad qualities. He is second of my children. He is eighteen years old. Two of his good qualities: one he is an expert in computers, and has much knowledge about it, and he is very smart. For example, any malfunction in the laptop or the computer I ask him to fix, or

when we have a problem in the program, he helps us right away. When he needs any help with his Video Games, he becomes friendly and behaves like innocent children. The second of his good qualities is that he gets good grades although he does not study. For example, he gets As and Bs, but we never see him studying. When we ask him how he gets good grades although he doesn't study at home, or do his homework at home, he says, he did all his homework at school. As to his bad qualities, he has many



of those. The first one is he uses his knowledge about things that are not necessary. For example, he spends a lot of money and time behind the screen of his computer, playing violent games and playing with others in several countries directly via the Internet. This is a kind of addiction. He plays upon entering the house until he goes to bed. It is equivalent to 10 hours a day. His second bad qualities are he is impatient, impolite, and unfriendly. For example, he is quick to get angry, he is rarely kind, and he barely has good behavior or politeness. When he needs anything, he insists a lot and makes a lot of problems until he gets the thing that he wants. He never helps me with my homework, and it is weird that although he is a teenager, he does not go out with his friends or us to parks. He spends all his time playing electronic games. Finally, nobody is perfect, but I love my son. He is a member in my family, and I wish him a good future, and that depends on him because life is very difficult.

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# Advantages and Disadvantages of Being a Woman in the United States

by Shafaq Al Taie

ESL 103, Instructor Sara Ferguson

Every morning I see my neighbor Mary wake up at 5 a.m. to dress for work and take some snacks with her for her job that goes from 7 a.m. until 5 p.m., and when she comes back she takes care of her three boys, cleans the house, makes dinner and she makes sure to go to sleep early to wake up early. That shows me how hard her life is. On the other hand, when I talked to her I see how independent she is and how much she values herself. I can tell there are many advantages of being a woman in the United States. She will be raised to have a strong personality. She can have equal opportunities to men. She is so independent. In contrast, there are many disadvantages of being a woman. For example, she can be lonely and exhausted and she can lose her feminine side and also neglect herself.

Being a woman in the United States has many positive sides for women. For example, since a female is very young, parents and society treat her in a way that shapes her personality to be strong, they allow her to speak for herself, experience new things, and decide for herself. When she gets older she will have equal opportunities in education and work to men. She can choose any major at college, and also she can apply for any kind of job, even the physically hard jobs like carpentry, police, and auto repair so that will make her so independent.

On the other hand, to be a woman in the United States also has negative sides. She can be so tired from her full time job that takes almost all her day. She can be

lonely because she can't have time for making friends and communicating with her family members. Since she can get hard jobs like maintenance and military jobs, that can affect her feminine side like wearing non elegant clothes, and tying her hair all the time. Women in the United States sometimes completely neglect themselves. They can't find enough time to take care of themselves. For example, they don't have time for relaxing or girls' time, when girls spend time with other girls talking and laughing or doing some nice activities together. Women in the United States sometimes even neglect their own health when they don't have time to cook healthy food or when they keep delaying their appointments with the doctors because they're so busy because of their jobs.

In general, being a woman in any part of the world has many challenges and benefits. Especially in the United States there are many benefits that can make any women in the world wish to be American women. On the other hand, there are dark sides of being woman in the United States that can devastate the American female.

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## Advantages and Disadvantages for a Female in the USA

by Seemaa Hadi

ESL 103, Instructor Sara Ferguson

The United States is an open country where every person who lives in it can feel the freedom in the way of thinking, religion and many more aspects. As a female living in the United States, I believe that I have lots of advantages such as the law is on my side whereas there are many stereotypes that are disadvantages.

Females in the United States have many advantages. As an example, the law is in their sides in most family problems. The law gives the right for a woman to as for divorce if there are considerable reasons and mostly win child support. On the other hand, the society doesn't shame a divorced woman. Instead, the society supports her to stand up and express herself and be effective by giving her the right to study and work without limitation.

The disadvantages that can affect a female in the United State are the bad stereotypes, especially in the media. Unfortunately, we see that the media always uses the bodies of ladies in a bad way. It makes things in the advertisement look more attractive. That can give an idea that all women should be looking fit or dress in that way. Also, in some advertisements the producers think that most women have narrow thinking, as in one of the advertising about the Pink BIC pen that has been

released. They show as if women were waiting for a pink pen to be able to write their thoughts and ideas.

Law and stereotypes are one of the examples that show advantages and disadvantages a female could face in the United States. Still, the USA is one of the best countries where a person can live and raise a family.

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## Is it Easy to Be a Male in the USA?

*by Mbey Ipi*

*ESL 103, Instructor Sara Ferguson*

Three months ago, I was watching TV, and a woman asked this question to the other females: "Why do all religions represent the most powerful god as a man? Why did Jesus choose to be a man when he came to visit us on Earth?" The male in most cultures on Earth, even in the USA seems like the most powerful, responsible guide. Because I am a male, and I have been in the USA for 6 years, I can tell you there are some advantages and some disadvantage to being a male in this country.

Traditionally, when society has had a problem, people have looked to the leader who could fix the problem, and lead them to handle what is wrong. Most of time, the male was in front. This tradition persists here in the USA and gives the male many advantages. First, in the work place, employers more often hire males, or people more often elect males to represent them, or to be in the army and for the heavy duties. For instance, last year, women associates in Walmart sued their company because of gender injustice in promotion. Second, males in the USA do less housework and get more time to enjoy with friends. In addition, it seems more natural for males to study science, engineering, and business than females in the USA. In sum, life can be better for males in the USA.

In contrast, there are disadvantage to being male in the USA. First, males fight all their life from when they are babies. Life for males is brutal. Since they begin to play with their friends sometimes they play aggressive games where they hide their feelings. In addition, in the case of divorce most of the time the male loses the trial, and cannot stay with his children.

In conclusion, there are many benefits to being male in the USA and some inconveniences. USA culture gives many benefits for males in work place and for leadership. In contrast, there are some social inconveniences. In my view, norms, values, and traditions are changing, and those advantages are decreasing, and the same for the disadvantages.

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## Females in the United States

*by Mary Jabbo*

*ESL 103, Instructor Sara Ferguson*

Life in the United States has lots of advantages and disadvantages, especially for females. A few years ago, I saw some programs on T.V. discussing the matter of being a woman. Do you know how many disadvantages females have in the United States? Because I live in the United States, I know that life in the United States has lots of advantages and disadvantages. In other words we can say being a woman in the United States means that women have lots of challenges, advantages, and disadvantages.

There are a lot of advantages in females' life in the United States. For example, women can show their emotions to all, and that is acceptable. Also, women have the right to be the president. In addition, women are not afraid of speaking about anything and in a loud voice, but there are a lot of countries which don't accept that. Also, women in the United States are free, so they can wear any clothes that they like. Women in the United States can work like men, and there is no difference between them. For example, there are a lot of women working at factories that need hard work, such as car factories, or in some places that need challenging work. They can drive big vehicles like buses and trucks. People are more inclined to help women than to help men. We can say that being a woman in the United States is awesome because women can show their emotions, vote, be free, be president, drive cars, and be independent.

On the other hand, being female in the United States has a lot of disadvantages. For example, women have to work very hard because they have to work both inside and outside their houses. They need to balance between those two difficult tasks. Women have to prepare and arrange their houses and



raise their children and go to work outside. Because women are free in the United States and can do anything they want, some people can hold this point against them. For example, women can drink alcohol, so some people can lead them to go in the wrong way, such as, they may lead them to have sex out of marriage. In addition life in the United States has many challenges for women, so they have to stay strong most of the time. Being strong all the time is a very difficult thing for them, especially when they become mothers because that will add more work for them, but they have to be strong in front of their children and their families to show the same beautiful and strong image to them. All of those reasons add more responsibilities to being a woman. Also, if a woman divorces from her spouse, her life will be very hard because she has to take all of the responsibilities and deal with income issues and take care of her home and the children at the same time. Females' life in the United States has a lot of challenges.

We can conclude that women play a very vital role in human progress and have a significant place in society, so most of their lives have many challenges, advantages, and disadvantages.

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## Be a Man

by Jeong Hoyeon  
ESL 103, Instructor Sara Ferguson

“Be brave.”, “Don’t cry.”, and “You must show good leadership.” If you are a man, maybe you have heard these. I am a man too, so I heard those often when I was young. In my case, I didn’t like these sayings because these words made me embarrassed and I thought a man could also cry when he wants to cry. Now I live in the United States and also I find there are an advantage and disadvantages for males through my observations.

The disadvantages are American men usually protect woman and usually fix machine or devices. I often see some

couples when I go shopping, to a restaurant, or to the theater. Men usually hold the woman’s stuff like her bag, and also men usually escort her. For example, the man walks on the sides of side walk which are near the road. Last weekend, my host father fixed the door which is broken, and he usually fixes machines at home. Men are also afraid danger, and men don’t know every machine or device.

However, the advantage for the American man is he does less household work. Honestly, this can become a disadvantage for females also. I saw in my host family that my host mom did household work like cooking dinner. My host father usually did household work also, but that was less than hers, even though both of them have jobs.

In conclusion, I realized the advantages and disadvantages of American males. In addition, males’ advantages can become females’ disadvantages. These elements are similar to my country, but I want to find a difference in the future if I get a chance.

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## My Brother

by Cristian Rolon Quintana  
ESL 103, Instructor Mimi Pollack



My brother is a combination of good and bad qualities. The first good thing about him is his personality. I like to spend time with him because I feel that he is the one most like me –

funny, happy, social, and a little crazy. When I lived in Paraguay, we spent a lot of time together talking with friends and making jokes in Guarani. We liked to do crazy things on motorcycles and visit our friends together. We always got along well. Another good thing about him is he plays sports. He is very athletic and knows almost every sport like soccer, volleyball, piqui volley, racing motorcycles, riding bikes and a lot of other things. When we played sports at home, we were always on the same team because we played well together. He is very good at playing sports and he likes to win. On the other hand, there are some bad things about his personality. First, he is very stingy about spending money and helping my mother. My mother lives on a farm and doesn’t have a job, and my

brother doesn't help her with money. He is one of my four brothers who likes to show off when he has money and show off what he eats, but doesn't help my mother. Another bad quality about him is he is very irresponsible. He doesn't care about his stuff or about his wife. For example, sometimes he goes to his friend's house and leaves his wife alone with their children day and night or for the whole weekend. It causes a lot of problems in their relationship because she gets angry when he leaves and they fight. I don't like that he does this to his family, but it is the way he is. Finally, nobody is perfect, but I love my brother and he is family.

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## Male Gender Roles

by Adwar Shamuna  
ESL 103, Instructor Sara Ferguson

The male gender roles are enforced by members of a community. When boys are a few years old, they will play with other boys only, and they will use cars, baby guns, and play soccer or football. When the boys are at the schools in USA, they will learn from each other how to be a good man when they grow up, and in my culture I learned from my parents and friends my gender roles. There are many advantages for males like being able to marry when the male wants, doing hard jobs, and not being shy or emotional, but the disadvantages are too much pressure to support the family when the man gets married, and sometimes the man gets angry easily. Being a male is not hard in the USA. When males are older than 18 years old, they will have opportunity to make a decision to get married. If the men have a good income or a job, they will start to find a girl, so they can get married. If the men do not have a degree, they can take the advantage to work hard jobs that do not need a degree like construction. For example, my friend is 25 years old, and he works as a painter with no degree. Males usually do not get shy when they want to go somewhere or to take something. For example, when my math teacher wants us to do some problems on the board, sometimes only boys do it because they do not get shy. The men are non-emotional when they face hard things like death or losing something important. For example, when I was a child, my dad took my toy car, but I did not cry.

Some disadvantages for men in my culture when they get married are supporting the family all their lives. First they have to work, and support the family with money. If the spouse does not work, then the responsibilities are more. Second they have to watch their children at home or school when they get back from work. Some other disadvantages are men get angry easily when something does not come true. For example, if I build a

small thing like a cage, and the doors do not come out like I want, then I will break the whole cage.

In conclusion, males get married when they want, they can do hard jobs, and they do not get shy, but they have to support the family when they get married, and they get angry easily. Will man always have to find a woman to get married, or is that going to change in future?

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## Female in the United States

by Ying Tang  
ESL 103, Instructor Sara Ferguson

Sometimes we can hear a female ask "can you help me?" to a male. A lot of males will say yes. He will think that I need to help her because she is a female. I am a female, so I have more experience about being female in United States, about their advantages and disadvantages.

Females in the United States have more time to relax. For example, a lot of Chinese females will choose to get married and have a baby after graduating from school. However, they need to go to work right after. Chinese women focus more on their family and work. They do not have time to relax and get entertainment. Many US females get married and have a baby, so they can be a good housewife. They usually stay at home to take care of babies. Females in United States have more relaxation time to enjoy their life.

When females in the United States become a mother, they have more time to enjoy family life and play with their baby. However, in the United States, people always have a big family. Most families in US have two or three kids, so a mother needs to worry a lot. On the other side, if you have a lot of kids when you are old, you will have a lot of kids to take care of you.

Next is about safety. The law in China does not allow people to have a gun.

However, in the United States, people can buy guns everywhere. Females in the United States feel less safe than the females in China.

Therefore, females in China have less time to relax, and they need to take care of both their families and work. That's also another reason that US females have more time to spend with their husband and babies. However, a big concern for US females is safety.

## The Benefits of Living with Your Parents

by Ronya Toma

ESL 103, Instructor Crystal Carothers

Encouraging young adults to stay with their parents until they are married is more beneficial than moving out at 18 years old for several reasons. First of all, when you stay with your parents, you will have the opportunity to focus on your education, to achieve your goals more easily than other young adults who leave their parents at 18 years old to develop their independence. For example, when you live with your parents you don't have to worry about seeking for a job or paying bills. Your parents will support you to pay for your education fees and will offer you everything you need so you can finish your school. Secondly, living with your parents at the same house will teach you several things like, how to be responsible with your own decisions that you make in your life and how to build a good relationship with everyone who is around you, but when you leave your parents at 18 years of age you won't be mature enough to deal with life problems. For instance, my parents taught me several things like how to respect other's opinion, how to spend my money wisely, how to take care of the house and how to solve daily life problems that I face. Finally, when you live with your parents they will take care of you when you have any health problems.

Especially if you get sick they will give you their full attention. For example, they will make you food that you like and they will bring you your medicine on time to make you get better. Otherwise, living without parents means you will be left alone and no one will take care of you like your parents. For instance, when I got sick my parents were so concerned about me when I was at the hospital they did everything they could to make me feel better and the most beautiful part is when they brought me bunch of colored flowers. In conclusion, living with your family until you get married is more beneficial than if you moved out alone at 18 years old.

## Facts about My Daughter

by Thaera Yadakou

ESL 103, Instructor Mimi Pollack

My daughter is a combination of good and bad qualities. She is 13 years old and in the 7th grade. She is intelligent. For example, she is one of the smartest students in her class, and she takes honors classes. She studies all the time. She does her homework right after she gets home, and she never sleeps until she makes sure all of her work is done. She works hard. She also has good grades. In fifth grade, her teachers and principal picked her to represent her school because she is smart. My daughter helps her cousin who is in the same grade as her with



her homework. Second, she has good behavior, and she is helpful. For example, she is polite and respects us. She helps me around the house. I like that her actions are mature. She doesn't hurt anyone and she thinks before she talks. A lot of my cousins

say that she is a good daughter and they praise her. I am really proud of her. She is going to be successful in her life. However, my daughter has also bad qualities. She is sensitive. Therefore, whenever something bad happens, she gets upset really fast and sometimes cries. Her feelings get hurt really fast. Sometimes when people are talking and accidentally look at



her, she claims they are talking about her. When she talks to me about what happened, I tell her to have confidence and not to take things the wrong way. I don't like this trait in her personality. She also complains. She complains about our apartment, her bedroom, her school, her homework, the food that she eats, her clothes, and everything else that bothers her. I wonder how other parents react when their kids complain. In conclusion, nobody is perfect, but I love my daughter and she is family!

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## 5 Languages to Communicate Love

by Jayanti Vicino

ESL 106, Fall 2015, Instructor Carolina Moxley

"To love is nothing. To be loved is something, but to love and be loved is everything." -T. Tolis. Have you ever wondered if there is a language that you can speak to transmit love? Gary Chapman, who is a relationship counselor and the author of *The Five Love Languages*, explained that after many years of counseling, he realized that there are five main languages to communicate love. They are: Words of affirmation, Quality time, Receiving Gifts, Act of Service and Physical touch. Words of affirmation are words to give compliments and encouragement to our loved ones, while Quality time is sharing time and doing activities with those whom we care about the most. Receiving gifts is to make or buy something for the other person to show that you have thought of them. Furthermore, Acts of service is the action that you help out in every type of situation, for example, housework or special projects. Finally, Physical touch is a physical contact with your loved one, such as holding hands, kissing, hugging or sexual intercourse. Sometimes we may speak a language believing that we are communicating love, but the other person may not understand our language; as a result, he or she might not feel loved by us. Understanding what love language you and your loved ones speak is really important to receive and transmit love in a way that makes us feel really loved. Furthermore, we are able to improve our connections with our loved ones, and be happier. The three most important love languages in my life are: Quality time, Word of affirmation and Acts of service. Realizing what love language my loved ones and I speak made me improve my relations with them.

My primary love language is Quality time. Nothing is more important for me than sharing time with my loved ones. According to Gary Chapman, the main point of quality time is to give our full attention to the other person by doing something together and increasing the concept of "togetherness." Besides, it does not really matter what you are

doing, or where you are going, the real purpose of this love language is to be together. Also, conversing is really important for those like me that consider quality time their primary love language. It is very important for us to have daily conversations in which we can share our emotions and the events of the day, and we desire our loved one to pay full attention to listen to us. We want our loved ones to share their feelings and emotions as well to be more emotionally close. This sharing of feelings is very important to fill our love tank and feel loved. One of the moments when I feel most loved is when someone I care gives me their full attention by listening to me, for I feel like I am important to them. For example, I remember once this guy, whom I used to spend a lot of time with, was always listening to me. I spent hours with him only talking and talking, and most of the time my dialogues were not even meaningful. However, what I remember the most was the way he was looking at me, with a smiling face and watchful eyes that told me he was fully interested in whatever I was saying. I never felt more loved than that moment he was there willing to listen whatever I wanted to say with real interest. As a final point, realizing that quality time is my primary love language helped me to know myself better. As a result, now it is easier to explain to others what makes me happy or what hurts me, so my loved ones and I can use this information to have a more peaceful and happier relationship.

My brother's primary love language is Words of affirmation. Nothing is more important for him to receive compliments and encouraging words. Gary Chapman explains that to give compliments and encouraging words is really important for people whose primary love language is words of affirmation. Furthermore, it is really important that our words are sincere and expressed in an honest way. We cannot say sweet words in a sarcastic way, for the person who we are talking with will interpret our words based on how the tone of



our voice sounds. The main point of this love language is to feel valued and appreciated from the people we care about the most. Regarding children, we all know that children crave our full attention in every way. However, after reading this book, I realized what love language my 5-year-old brother craves the most. For example, every time my family and I have to go somewhere and dress nice, he comes to my mom and me and starts to give us many compliments that how nice and beautiful we look just to show himself and receive compliments as well. It is obvious that he craves compliments, and it is like Gary Chapman said, "Your method of expressing love may be an indication that that would also make you feel loved" (139). That is definitely my brother's case. He loves when someone compliments him and makes him feel special. Also, whenever I told him "Wow Joshua, you look amazing with that suit. You are going to be the nice boy of the evening I love you" he would reply "thank you" with a blushing face and a satisfied look that showed me that he got what he wanted. In the end, it is really easy for me to give him compliments and sweet words because with his sweetness it would be impossible for me not to say anything. For this reason, he certainly knows that I love him, and also I do not have to put so much effort to show him that.

My father's primary love language is Acts of service. Nothing makes him happier than someone who serves him and helps him out. Gary Chapman claims that washing dishes, cleaning up, cooking, doing laundry, and helping your loved one with a project are all acts of service. "What can I do to help you?" is one of the most important questions that a person in the "Acts of Service" category wants to hear. As a matter of fact, you can make these people feel loved by helping and doing favors for them. Knowing that my father's primary love language is "Acts of Service" makes it easy for me to understand how to express love to him. Now I do remember and understand all his

requests in the past when he asked me to help him to cook or to iron his shirts. I finally realized why he was so sad and criticized every time I denied to help him. "People tend to criticize most loudly in the area where they themselves have the deepest emotional need" (107). My father and I are really similar. His primary love language is my second important one, but we used to fight all the time. Why is that? For the simple reason that we could not meet each other's needs. I always feel love from him because he always cooked for me, and worked hard to provide the food. On the other hand, he did not always felt loved by me even though I was washing dishes, doing laundry and sweeping the floor. All those things were fine, but they were not what he craved the most from me. They were all "Act of service" actions, but like the example in the book, my father and I were speaking different dialects too, which means that I was not doing what he wanted the most. Afterwards, now that I know what his heart craves the most, I will start to try some new recipes to cook for him and iron some of his shirts. Finally, I know that these simple things will make him very happy and feel loved by me.

Lastly, learning how to communicate love in the right way will help you to improve and save your relationships. To tell the truth, it might not be easy for you to speak the language your loved ones crave the most, but we do not express love for ourselves but for others. Indeed, when you start doing something that does not come naturally for you, in that exact moment you are expressing love because you decided to put someone else's needs first. That is love, and it might need a lot of effort; still, it is worth it because love is the most complete feeling which we cannot live without.

## Film Analysis

by *Marcela Massaglia*  
*Communication 120*



In this essay, I will analyze the in-class film *Enough Said* with critical eyes, observing the interpersonal interactions between the characters and their communication styles. Also I will analyze some of my interactions with significant others, relating with the book *Interplay*, using chapters 9, 10, 11 and 12.

"Sometimes the basis of this attraction comes from learning about ways we are similar, either

in experiences or attitudes.” (Chapter 9, page 276) Albert invited Evan for dinner and since it was their first time going out it is pretty normal to ask questions, but as it goes and they see their similarity, they attract each other more. The questions started as “What do you do?” and the questions/answers that connected them with similarities as they are both divorced and have kids, who are going to college out of town.

“Some conflict approaches are so destructive that they are almost guaranteed to wreak havoc on relationships.” (Chapter 12, page 383) Eva agrees with her best friend Sarah to invite Albert for a dinner in Sarah’s house. During the dinner, Eva starts to criticize Albert for everything and be unpolitic, constraining him in front of Eva’s friends. Criticism is considered one of four toxic forms of communication, and in the movie we can notice that Albert got really upset with Evan. After the dinner he drove her directly to her house, affirming that he was offended. Albert even says: “I feel that I spent the afternoon with my ex-wife.”

“The terms dishonesty and manipulation reflect the nature of strategy.” (Chapter 11, page 353) What happens is that at the same party that was presented to Albert, Eva gets one more customer for their massage, Marianne. The complicated thing is that Albert is Marianne’s ex-husband, and Eva discovers gradually because of the constant complaints that Marianne tells her about her ex. She says horrors about a man who she was married to a while ago. However, she did not know what to do and then kept going out with him and seeing all the bad things in him as his ex-wife described, even that she would probably not care about. At the end, she was at Marianne’s house and Albert gets there, and the situation lead us to understand that Eva was playing strategy with both of them, even when it was not her intention.

“...we are uncomfortable around those who are too competent—perhaps because we look bad by comparison.” (Chapter 9, page 275) When my communication professor announced that the class required two presentations I got really nervous. First, I thought that it would be almost impossible, then that it would be okay; then, after the first day of presentations, I got really scared. I have a reason to feel uncomfortable: the first group of people presented really well so that I was impressed. I do not have a lot of experience with speeches, at least not in English; also, I feel that I am the only international student in the class, which makes me feel even more nervous. I am confident that everything will be okay and I will survive, but I have to confess that after watching my classmate’s speech I got more nervous.

“Cross-sex friendships—at least for heterosexuals—present some challenges that don’t exist among all-male or all-female companionship.” (Chapter 10, page 310) As a girl that grew up surrounded by male friends until 14 years old, I have believed and tried many times to have cross-sex friendships. Until I was 12 years old, boys would just provoke me and I would run after them, and then we would all laugh about it. However, when I turned 14 years old I started having problems with my friends that were boys, because they started showing attraction and second intentions besides our friendship. With time I learned to hardly trust any man

that said he just wanted to be my friend. Recently, I passed through an interesting situation. When I was 13 years old, I used to play tennis with Giovanni, who is 2 years older than me. I was “in love” and he would not be interested on me at all (especially at my age) and curiously we turned out to be “best friends” 2 years later. We would talk every week, and when I was in Brazil, we would go out together for years and he never showed any different interest on me for those 5 years of intimacy. However, when we started talking again, I was 15 years old and I was in the beginning of my first relationship and got on my second relationship pretty soon. Almost 4 months ago, when I broke up, he came to talk to me and he declared that he had been in love for 2 years and he was waiting for this opportunity. From now on, I do not have any faith on cross-sex friendships, because I truly believed for once that he just wanted to be my friend.

I have changed in the past 6 months about the way I see things, but more drastically in the way I would give “feedback” when I was defending myself during a conversation. My past way would be evaluation: “An evaluation message judges the other person, usually in a negative way.” (Chapter 11, page 350) I would use a lot of “you” in my phrases and put the pressure on the other person. However, I noticed many flaws in my way to communicate and solve problems using this technique. After being tired of unsolved problems and many unnecessary fights, I started to use more complex phrases, and use the word “I” in a way to not put pressure on the other. Last week I argued with my ex-boyfriend and noticed that he used many insults disguised in statements using “you.”

Analyzing my past relationship, I could see that we passed through all the styles of handling a conflict. I have noticed that at the beginning we would deal by accommodation: “...when we allow others to have their own way rather than asserting our own point of view.” (Chapter 12, page 373) When it was the beginning, I believe we would do that to other to please each other, as a sign of love. Then, after one year, we turned to competition. It is a win-lose situation, when both want to be right. One of my passions is law, so imagine someone that likes to argue until something is solved, and there is one right and one wrong! Furthermore, in our last stage of the

relationship, we were using avoidance: "Avoidance occurs when people ignore or stay away from conflict." (Chapter 12, page 372) We would have a problem, start to argue and then just let it go. I used to say: "You have your opinion, I have mine. It seems that nothing will change and no one will surrender, so let's move on." I do not think it is the best way to deal with problems, especially because after practicing avoidance for 6 months, we broke up. When we discuss what we did wrong in our relationship, this is one of the reasons we point to.

Throughout the movie, I could see again how communication is important. I could see the Eva was being affected by everything Marianne said about Albert, and the miscommunication, because she realized that they were married, but she did not know what to do or say about it. It includes when they discover that she knew all along and she did not know how to communicate to fix it and explain her side.

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## Editor's Corner

*Victoria Thatte, Editor*

If you would like to submit your writing to the newsletter, please contact Victoria Thatte at [Victoria.Thatte@gcccd.edu](mailto:Victoria.Thatte@gcccd.edu)

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