

Dear Professor Belli and readers,

For this research project, selecting a topic may have been my biggest struggle of this project, as the topic couldn't be too broad or too narrow, and I couldn't tell what topics would be considered either. I started off by focusing on the idea of change, or lacking the ability to create change to be more exact. Throughout everyone's life, people face circumstances outside of their control, things that can not be changed no matter what action they take or how much they want it to. What I find so interesting about science fiction, is its ability to challenge that concept and alter things that shouldn't be changed. Initially, I considered the idea of totalitarian societies because I thought it was interesting that the government tried to control people's lives but after some consideration, I decided there was nothing I could say that would be different from what we already know. Therefore I kept thinking and as I was watching television, I heard mention of the word "immortality". I thought about the possibility of people attempting to change their lives to avoid death, a fate that every person meets in their life no matter how much they'd like to avoid it. Thus, I decided that I would center my research project around life extension, the idea that a lifespan could be extended beyond its normal length, as it is still within my interest and is a topic my class and I could still learn more about.

After developing the idea, researching and writing the research topic proposal was much easier. Just looking up the words "life extension" brought up plenty of terms such as "extension" or "rejuvenation". I began researching on several things relating to life extension that I might be able to use in my presentation; background information, methods in development, relation to science fiction, any successful processes created in real life, and the reasons why it should be supported or stopped. I finished organizing all the information I gathered, created my research topic proposal, and submitted it. The next time we had class, we did peer review, and based on the feedback from my peers, they thought one of the most important things I needed was an argument. Although it was clear I wanted to discuss the pros and cons of life extension, I didn't choose which side I would argue for making the purpose of my research topic too vague and broad to understand. Even though life extension sounds like an incredible idea that provides many opportunities, I thought back to how we discussed utopias earlier this semester and how I mentioned the concept of happiness needs sadness to have meaning. Keeping the idea of balance in mind, I chose to argue against life extension and also got an idea of my research question to center the project around.

Throughout this project, it has shown me that my biggest problem is constantly being too general in my statements and claims. In class, we did peer review again with our newly revised proposals and I even had a conference with the professor to get feedback. The majority of the feedback I received suggested that my proposal was more direct compared to the last one but could still use a bit more specific statements, such showing better relation through terms using transitions or using more sources to explain my statements. Our next assignment was to craft short presentations as preparation for the final presentation and the feedback I received also showed me that I'm still too vague in presenting my claim since I needed specific examples rather than generalizations. I also only vocalized my research question to the audience rather than putting it in the slides for everyone to clearly see. Overall, the project taught me that as a writer and

thinker, I could create ideas but I need to narrow down my thoughts much more in order to get my point across.

Sincerely,

Tyler Yuen