EL Civics #11: Cultural Difference

Model Essay Outline

Topic: Displaying emotions: Differences Between Polish Culture and American Culture

**Introduction**

Thesis Statement (first draft): Americans are much more controlled in their display of negative emotions than Polish people, but are more open in expressing positive emotions.

Thesis Statement (final): Americans are more controlled in their display of negative emotions and more likely to express positive emotions when compared to Polish people, which creates a lot civility in social contacts in the U.S., but also puts barriers to social change.

**Supporting Paragraph 1**

Topic sentence: Americans believe in the value of controlling one’s emotions

Supporting details:

1. Non-confrontational culture (situations which might lead to open displays of negative emotions should be avoided)

* politics, religion, sex, personal income, and other topics which may cause disagreement are taboo topics
* debates are public and guarded by rules
* conversational politeness taught from early age
* importance of complementing and acknowledging the other

1. Negative emotions need to be dealt with

* popularity of psychotherapy and antidepressant drugs
* anger management programs implemented by companies

1. Upsides and downsides for the society:

* Civil society
* Such inability to express frustration and dissatisfaction (bottling-up of negative emotions) leads to:
  + depression epidemic
  + mass shootings
* few means of mass communication among the less educated population 🡪 inability to organize; along with the tendency NOT to express dissatisfaction, this results in their weak power to improve their living and working conditions

**Supporting Paragraph 2**

Topic sentence: Polish people feel it is okay to express negative emotions

Supporting details:

1. Open confrontation and complaint are encouraged

* Historically, bloody remonstration was the only recourse against foreign appropriation (confrontation = courage; the heroes are those who have confronted the oppressors)
* People love arguing about politics, as well as telling jokes about sex (not much religious discussion since there is one strongly dominant religion) and such discussions often accompany food and drinking; nobody gets offended (just the opposite)
* Petty arguments and rudeness in public places are common
* People love to share their complaints (their illnesses, what went wrong in an event; how bad their children are; how hard they work; how bad their boss is 🡪 community building through sharing pain)
* Complements are appreciated but usually denied

1. Family and friends are your therapists

* In order to confine in them, you do need to disclose your feelings 🡪 results in a better connections with others (although you often get bad advice)

1. Upsides and downsides:

* Open envy and unwillingness to acknowledge others’ accomplishments
* Society wasting time on petty squabbles
* The “masses” are better able to vocalize their problems and organize

**Conclusion**

TBA