

Mrs. Boyd

Honors English II

20 May 2013

How do citizens' levels of self-esteem affect themselves and/or their society?

"I Love Me: As Self-Esteem Goes Up, Your Stress May Go Down"

1. **Summary:** The article "I Love Me: As Self-Esteem Goes Up, Your Stress May Go Down" attempts to examine the positive effects of a high self-esteem. It begins by focusing on the concept that a high level of self-esteem will reduce one's stress and concludes with a discussion about how to better one's self-esteem.

2. **Evaluation:** Articulating the purpose of this article was a challenge. I could not ~~tell~~ ^{determine whether} if the author was trying to inform me of new research that was being conducted about high self-esteem levels lowering stress or ^{to persuade} ~~persuading~~ me that it were true. I finally concluded that in either case, her tactics were ineffective. While at the beginning she discusses the relationship between self-esteem and stress, towards the end she adds, "Lovelace's other advice for feeling better about yourself: Exercise. Eat nutritiously. Be careful about how you interpret the things that go on in your life." Furthermore, Lovelace states, "Feeling bad about yourself adds to your level of stress." Although this is great and wonderful to [?] know, the author does not further explain how stress and self-esteem are related. Instead, she discusses how Lovelace believes "there are at least two-levels of self-esteem." The article begins discussing one ^{idea} ~~thing~~ and concludes with another. Also, the whole of her

Explain

clear analysis

quotations derive from the mouth of one person: Richard Lovelace. While Lovelace has been a "Winston-Salem psychotherapist" for the duration of "19 years" his perspective is the only one mentioned. This provides a very one-sided argument. If I am trying to be persuaded, I would like to hear more than just one perspective on an issue; it aides it supporting the authors claim. To sum up: this article was not effective. I could not tell the author's purpose. Was I being informed? If so, about what? There were too many topics discussed for this to be clear. Was I being persuaded? If so, she provided a very one-sided argument that decreased her claim.

strong criticism

3. **Reflection:** I would say that this article had ~~very~~ little effect on my thinking about this topic. While I first believed that I was going to read an article about a positive effect of high self-esteem, I soon realized that the author wanted to solely talk about one man and many theories. She began to discuss how high self-esteem lowers stress, but she never concluded. I did not hear a new perspective; therefore my thinking was not altered.

direct reflection

clearer conclusion to earlier point

Valentine, Valca. "I Love Me: As Self-Esteem Goes Up, Your Stress May Go Down." Charlotte

→ Observer (Charlotte, NC). 29 Apr 1990: 1E+. SIRS Issues Researcher. Web. 08 May 2013.

Citation should begin with author.

"Society of the Self-Absorbed"

1. **Summary:** The article "Society of the Self-Absorbed" intends to inform readers several perspectives on the effects of narcissism, aka a too high level of self-esteem, on the home. It discusses the positive and negative implications of self-love from the perspectives of several psychologists, therapists, lawyers, etc...

about

2. **Evaluation:** Because the articles purpose is not to persuade, an objective approach is crucial. This impartial point of view is achieved by the inclusion of various sources that

provide diverse views on the idea of narcissism. Therapists from the Tampa Bay area, Dr. Judianne Densen-Gerber, Dr. Steven Berglas, Dr. Robert Glen, Elisabeth Reading, Steven Gaber, and Charles Simpkinson are all sources whose positions are considered. Each states their own opinion so the reader is not informed which position the author leans towards. This allows them the opportunity to formulate their own opinion without bias.

Densen-Gerber is cited in the article when she states, "So narcissistic parents can produce children who feel isolated, lonely, abandoned and rejected, with nobody to lean on except financially, she said." Here we see that narcissism, or a high self-esteem, can have negative effects on an individual. Dr. Robert Glen provides a scenario in which self-loving parents demand too much from their children. In this case, "The child can develop problems in self-esteem, feeling that to be loved, approved of or worthwhile as a person you must be constantly achieving more things." On the opposite side, Steven Gerber says,

"I'm concerned about the breakdown of the family and the lack of communication between parent and child," he said. But "I'd blame an increase in television watching before I'd blame narcissism." Charles Simpkinson even argues that "Just because you're interested in understanding yourself from within doesn't mean you're stuck on yourself... This form of self-absorption--an inner-awareness movement, perhaps--may be growth" compared to people who are "merged with their parents and don't have a good sense of themselves and their own needs." So, this article offers perspective on both sides

of the spectrum: good and bad. It does not persuade because its intent is not to persuade.

It effectively informs a reader about two sides of a topic because that's what it set out to do.

Good Point

reinforcing Purpose

3?

3. **Reflection:** This article offered ^{3?} great perspective into the idea of high self-esteem. I did not feel as if I was being forced to fall onto one side of the topic. Instead, I was offered two views that were supported by quotations from various sources. But, after reading the article, I ironically feel as if I am favoring one side. Because of Dr. Densen-Gerber's long list of effects that egotistic parents had on their children including the notion that they "can produce children who feel isolated, lonely, abandoned and rejected, with nobody to lean on except financially" I was convinced that that a high self-esteem was something to accept with caution.

interesting result

Wells, Kris. "Society of the Self-Absorbed." St. Petersburg Times (St. Petersburg, FL). 23

→ Apr 1989: 1F & 6F. SIRS Issues Researcher. Web. 08 May 2013.

"Ending of the 'Best' of the Brightest"

1. **Summary:** The article "Ending the 'Best' of the Brightest" explains polices regarding the title of Valedictorian at several California high schools. It articulates reasons for why some schools are reluctant to name a single Valedictorian and why others have done away with the title all together.

2. **Evaluation:** While it doesn't seem like it, this article demonstrated the effect that citizens with low self-esteems can have on society. These students can become angered when they are not given the prestigious title. One student at Saugus High School was even prompted to "threaten suicide." The reason behind this growing trend in many or no Valedictorian is the fear of "unhealthy competition." With multiple number ones, schools are "raising self-esteem and lessening competition among the brightest students."

Assistant principal at San Marino High, Marilyn Colyar's, reasoning behind several

Valedictorians is “when you start focusing on that ONE person who's done the best, you're sending kids an implicit message that grades are the most important thing.” It goes on to list numerous California high schools i.e. Royal High School, and two dozen more that “either will have no valedictorians or a surfeit.” Susan Bonoff believes that “if you think of the valedictorian as an award of excellence, then it doesn't necessarily have to be one person, because excellence is more pervasive than that.” And these are just a few of the plethora of examples that support the articles claim that many California high schools are changing standards for their top students. It successfully accomplishes the goal of discussing the issue because (like Society of the Self-Absorbed) it provides ample sources and sufficient evidence, without trying to sway the reader.

3. **Reflection:** After reading my second article, I was led to believe that high self-esteem could cause more damage than lower ones. This article provides evidence for the opposite. Charles Sykes states that in “some way it's ironic because schools say they're preparing students for the world, but they're really insulating them from the real world, where there are winners and losers...eventually in this world of no losers, you're going to end up with no winners.” And, as a student that is competing for Valedictorian status, I find the idea of two number ones unsettling. If I worked to make myself number one, why shouldn't I have the privilege of the title? Because we are trying to appease everyone, other will have to be demeaned. However, like the article explains “The result of all these variations is a circus of compromises and alterations that often conflict and rarely satisfy everyone.”

Renwick, Lucille. "Ending the 'Best' of the Brightest." Los Angeles Times (Los Angeles,

→ CA). 18 Jun 1996: A1+. SIRS Issues Researcher. Web. 08 May 2013.