

Stylistic Analysis

I chose Frank Bruni as my columnist for this project based on the articles I read. They talked about issues I was interested in, and they caught my attention for many different reasons. He draws you in with his title and opening sentence, his “hook”, and then gives you all this information without making you feel ignorant or dumb. He uses examples and sources to back up his claims and opinions, and sways you to see his point of view with ease.

One of Bruni’s best strategies was the ways he wrote his articles in order to make a reader feel comfortable instead of being attacked for their opinions. He comments on somethings, makes fun of himself, or makes a joke to lighten the mood and put the reader at ease, all while leading into the topic he wants to talk about. His opening to his article “Romance, Rough Sex, or Rape?” is about his “obsession with the Oscars” and how he sometimes the academy doesn’t always choose the correct film as the winner, a feeling many people have experienced. While talking about it, he introduced his first point, Rocky the movie. He brings up many times later in the article, using it as a reference point and repeatedly saying its a movie everyone knows and loves. True to his style, he brings in examples and sources to back up his claim, and we as an audience are convinced by his point. It feel almost as if our eyes have been opened.

In other cases, one could compare his article set up to a defense lawyer's plan for his client. This is true in the case of his article, “The Scariest Catholic in America”. He grabs your attention with his title, as always, and then sets up the frame. Instead of using jokes, he gives you a brief background of the defendant, and then asks you a question as if you were a jury. He uses his words well, making it personal for the reader, as if he is addressing them directly. He also dumbs down most of problem and issue, only highlighting what he finds necessary for his case.

He uses words like “That’s it” and “That’s all” to simplify it without insulting the reader, trying to show the hilarity of the situation through his eyes. Later, he again brings in another source, Roman Catholic archbishop of Philadelphia, Charles Chaput, to back up his claims. He also, almost always, ends his articles with some sort of high note. In this case, it is a quote from his “defendant” to which replied with a short and sweet, “Amen.”

It seems no writer can register the topic of politics, and Frank Bruni is no different. In following his theme, his title will catch your eye and drag you in. Continuing in following his theme, he uses words to humanize his arguments, words like “cringe-worthy” which has modern meaning to us. He also acknowledges the faults in the Golden Globes, so someone can’t go back and use these same points against him. He knows they aren’t perfect, and he points them out in a humiliating way. He uses it to his advantage. He also uses the device of compare and contrast to his advantage, listing the accomplishments of Hollywood and then stating, in one sentence, what Washington has, or hasn’t done. He does it this way so we can visually see how little Washington has done through his eyes. He brings up the issues confronted that night, and uses them as examples, again following his trend in writing. Then ending it again in a uplifting and hopeful quote from someone that night.

We start to pick up pattern in how Frank Bruni writes his articles, and the secret to how he can convince us so easily. In the last article I read by him, “The Feminist Enlightenment of Giant Jocks”, he uses the same types of hooks, like the title, one liners and rhetorical questions, like “But women coaching men?”, and closing with an optimistic note that is short and sweet, “let’s chatter to ceilings at once: Hammon for president!”. We are familiar with all these now, and yet we still let them influence us to see his point of view. We don’t see it as offensive or rude, so why stop a good thing? He also knows when to pick and choose his battles, articles

about topics we feel strongly about and can agree with. He makes the information easy to digest, and keeps us coming back for more. By writing about topics we feel strongly about every once in a while, he can keep writing about politics and other subjects we wouldn't normally go out in search for, but read anyway because we like the way he writes and his point of view on them. It works, and I applaud his algorithm to a decent article.

Work Cited

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