

Essay paper



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Canadian Identity: A Rhetorical Analysis Essay In this essay, the articles ‘ Listen to the north’ by John Ralston Saul and ‘ Which ‘ Native’ History? By Whom? For Whom? ’ by J. R. Miller will be analyzed, specifically looking at each authors argument and his appeal to ethos, logos and pathos. In the first article, ‘ Listen to the North’, author John Ralston Saul argues that current Canadian policy when it comes to our north, and the people that reside there, is out of date and based on southern ideals that hold little bearing on the realities that face northern populations.

He suggests instead that the policies and regulations should be shaped by people who know the territory and it’s needs, namely people who live there. In the second article, ‘ Which ‘ Native’ History? By Whom? For Whom? , Author Jim Miller discusses conventions in recording native history, focusing on an area he refers to as native-newcomer history. He discusses topics such as who should be recording said history, and for whom it should be intended, as evidence in the title.

Both of these articles provide arguments that appeal to ethos, logos and pathos, but it is my opinion that John Ralston Saul makes a more convincing argument to his audience in ‘ Listen to the north’ than Jim Miller makes in ‘ Which ‘ Native’ History? By Whom? For Whom? ’. The First appeal that John Ralston Saul makes is to ethos, and while credentials such as being the president of PEN International, various awards and being a well respected professional in his field all give credit to his name, he also shows that he has first hand knowledge in the specific topic he is covering.

He does this through the use of a personal anecdote about his experience in the north, as well as mentioning the several times he has travelled to the

north in his later career. Considering Saul's audience, namely readers interested in reform of policies and practices in the north, I believe that this makes a stronger argument than Jim Miller does in his article.

This would be due to the fact that Miller does not provide any indication as to his experience in the field on which he is writing, and though he does have impressive credentials himself, including a doctorate, being a professor at the University of Saskatchewan, and having a Canadian research chair position, the lack of said mention would provide a weaker argument to his audience, consisting of people interested in or researching about methods of recording native history.

The next convincing argument that John Ralston Saul makes is his appeal to logos, it makes logical sense that a person who lives and works in the north would know best what is needed for northern people. This means his argument that northern people should be instrumental in creating northern policy makes a strong logical point, and a strong argument to his audience, who will most likely be able to see the logic in this. One example he uses is the current state of military presence in the north, the rangers.

He talks about the uniform given to these men and women, which consists of a hooded sweatshirt and a baseball cap. John Ralston Saul states that " You can't wear this outfit outside ten months of the year" (4), and it would make logical sense that a person who lives in the north would not choose such an outfit, as it would be too ineffective in day to day use. Miller also uses logos in his argument when he discusses the fact that native-newcomer history should be reported by both native and non-native historians.

Again, this appeals to the logical side of his readers, who would be able to follow the train of thought stating that if a history involves two separate groups of people, then both sides of said history should be examined, and doing such will give you a much more complete picture of events. Where his argument falls short in contrast to ‘ Listen to the North’ is the fact that though Miller makes the logical point of the recording of said history should be shared, he does not go on to provide as strong examples to his point, where Saul does.

The last appeal that was made in ‘ Listen to the north’ was the appeal to pathos. The author shares a sense of how ridiculous it is that northern peoples have less of an influential role in planning policy and regulation in the north. Using the example of the snowmobiles that rangers have to urinate on to get started in the cold north, Saul portrays a sense of the almost comical nature of having persons who live far away from the real life issues and hardships form policies. The reader then feels the same way the author does, which defiantly advances his argument.

Miller also makes his appeal to pathos in ‘ Which ‘ Native’ History? By Whom? For Whom? ’, but again, I believe that it is a less effective argument, and appeals less to the emotions of his audience. Millers argument is more based off a feeling of ownership he tries to create in his audience, the native-newcomer history belongs to both parties, not one exclusively, this creates a feeling of entitlement, as well as a feeling of being included. At the end of the article, Miller states “ Which 'Native' history? Native-newcomer history. By whom?

Any and all students who are qualified and willing to carry out its methods. For whom? All Canadians” (35). I think that this is less effective than the feeling portrayed by Saul, one of ridiculousness of the current state of affairs, since persons would more likely agree with him if they also believe the current policy is foolish, as to not look foolish themselves. While both articles make strong points using the argumentative techniques of ethos, logos and pathos, it is still my opinion that John Ralston Saul makes a stronger argument in ‘listen to the north’ than Jim Miller does in ‘Which ‘Native’ History?

By Whom? For Whom? '. Saul's use of personal connection to the topic, a stronger logical standpoint, and a more effective use of his readers emotions means that he by far has a stronger argument than his counterpart J. R. Miller. Works Cited: Miller, Jim. " Which 'Native' History? By Whom? For Whom. " Canadian Issues. Fall 2008 33-35. Saul, John Ralston. " Listen to the North. " Literary Review of Canada. 17. 8 (2009): 3-5.