

# America and diversity essay

[Countries](#), [United States](#)



David Brooks " People Like Us" article first appeared in the magazine The Atlantic Monthly in September 2003. In his essay, the author aims to convince his American audience that the United States is not as diverse as they think it is. He provides several surprising analyses of the American nation that shows the opposite of what they believe. The genre adopted for this article is in tandem with the audience and purpose. The author also successfully utilizes a number of rhetorical strategies to establish credibility, appeal to his readers' emotions and logical reasoning to appeal to intellect. In the final analysis, Brooks utilizes rhetorical and other technical devices to present a powerful and convincing argument.

Secondly, in order to reach out to his intended readers, the author clearly identifies who the audience is right from the beginning. The title of the article is " People Like Us" and the article begins with the statement " We all pay lip service to the melting pot, but we really prefer the congealing pot". This use of personal pronouns like ' us' and ' we' is further complemented by the use of the proper noun ' America' in the first paragraph. Brooks therefore identifies the target audience as all Americans and consequently the rest of the text utilizes personal pronouns to create a sense of community or oneness. This is significant considering the article is about the entrenchment of anti-diversity attitudes and practices in a singular multi-cultural society. Thirdly, the author is keen to make the purpose of his writing clear from the onset of the article. He begins by stating a point of argument as a way of creating rapport with the reader. " Maybe it's time to admit the obvious. We don't really care about diversity all that much in America, even though we talk about it a great deal." From this excerpt, it is clear that the writer will

discuss American's attitudes towards diversity in their own backyard. This explains why he attempts to hypothesize an idealistic American society in which people of diverse backgrounds and cultures exist side-by-side. " But I have never been to or heard of that neighborhood," he admits. The purpose of this essay is therefore to prove that the American society is yet to embrace diversity beyond paying lip-service to it.

Once the audience and the purpose of the text are established, the author then utilizes ethos, a rhetorical device that hinges on the credibility of the author to the audience. Firstly, as observed before, Brooks identifies himself as an American, just like his audience. This qualifies him to discuss issues related to America with authority because he is one of those affected. His audience can therefore consider his argument as opposed to a non-American delving into the same topic. To this end, he continually applies personal pronouns in statements such as " My favorite illustration of this latter pattern comes from the first, noncontroversial chapter of *The Bell Curve*." Brooks also presents himself to his readers as a person who has knowledge and information about the American situation and society. For example, he posits that Democratic lawyers tend to live in suburban Maryland, while Republicans tend to live in suburban Virginia. (Brooks 132). He also authoritatively and carefully analyzes the 2000 census data that showed a slight increase in the racial integration of neighborhoods in the United States. (Brooks 133). In essence, by cementing his knowledge of diversity issues in America, he convinces the reader that his argument should be listened to.

In addition to establishing credibility, Brooks utilizes pathos which is an

appeal to his audience's emotions. Often, creating certain emotions pertinent to the audience helps to convince the later in relation to issues raised in a text. For instance, in an attempt to expose the positive aspects of societal homogeneity as opposed to diversity, the author writes, " But people love it. Make no mistake—we are increasing our happiness by segmenting off so rigorously." Here, Brooks exposes the fact that some Americans would rather remain in their segregated cocoons than expose themselves to the 'uncertain' world of varying cultures and orientations. Moreover he portrays diversity as being an ideal when he says, "' the dream of diversity is like the dream of equality. Both are based on ideals we celebrate as we undermine them daily.'" (Brooks 135). Towards the conclusion of the article, Brooks raises a series of issues as he tries to drive his point home. For example, he suggests that national service be made a mandatory for young people as a way of orienting the population with the rest of the society. He also suggests that people subscribe to news sources that are predominantly accessed by persons of different orientations. He further asks readers to pop into a megachurch once in a while. This is an attempt at appealing to readers to come out of their cultures and embrace others. His conclusion sums up his appeal to pathos, " Look around at your daily life. Are you really in touch with the broad diversity of American life? Do you care?" As a reader, one cannot help but appreciate the need to review how Americans approach racial diversity and consequently understand the need for personal efforts to reverse the trend. Brooks therefore excels in utilizing pathos.

Lastly, Logos, the art of persuasion through the use of logic and reasoning, is utilized in this article. This article is replete with real examples that are

backed by statements from authority figures or documents. First, Brooks points out to how new suburbs in Arizona and Nevada start out integrated. However, as they grow, each neighborhood develops its own personality. (Brooks 133). His use of this example is logical because what happens in these two states is likely to happen in the other 48 states. Second, the author mentions a marketing firm called Claritas which breaks down the U. S. population into sixty-two psycho-demographic clusters. (Brooks 133). This example indicates that American neighborhoods are not as diverse as they are believed to be. Also, by showing that companies are benefitting from homogeneity Brooks proves to his readers that this issue exists. The author is therefore able to demonstrate to the readers through factual, sequential and logical arguments that issues of diversity really exist in the American society.

In conclusion, the David Brooks' article is powerful and persuasive. This he achieves by choosing his genre, audience and purpose in an integrative and mutually-dependent manner. Moreover, he successfully utilizes ethos, pathos and logos by presenting himself as being credible, appealing to his readers' emotions and presenting a well-thought-out, logical and factual argument respectively. In essence, this article has the desired effect on the audience.

## **Works Cited**

Brooks, David. " People Like Us." Writing Public Lives. 3rd ed. Minnix, Christopher & Carol Nowotny-Young. Plymouth: Hayden-McNeil, 2012. 132-136. Print.