

# By the time i get to cucaracha

Literature



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Ben Mulinzi Dr. Zambreno English 106 26 February 2007 Article Review The article " By the Time I Get to Cucaracha" by Celia C. Perez-Zeeb tackles the timely topic of illegal immigration from the perspective of the laws that allow immigrants to become citizens by marrying someone who is already a citizen. The author considers how this method for becoming a citizen in the US is both far more difficult in reality than is thought, and how it has been used as a simple plot device for numerous television shows. Perez-Zeeb's point is that trivializing the legalities involved in this process and turning it into fodder for entertainment serves to further deepen the stereotype of lazy immigrants looking to illegally take advantage of wealth of the US economy. The article often reads more like a web blog entry than an actual exercise in journalism. This is because the style and tone of the article is one of passion rather than objectivity. Clearly Perez-Zeeb's own cultural ties to the subject acts as the guiding force in her decision to write. The tone is very personal, even to the point of the including the information that her own mother was a housekeeper. This personal connection to the issue doesn't serve to undermine her arguments, but at times it does interfere with her use of language. The usage of a four-letter obscenity seems distinctly out of place, and the use of informal speech and slang phrases reduces the overall authority (544-545). More damaging from a journalistic point of view is that the author neglects to offer evidence or citations to back up claims- introduced almost as an afterthought at the very end of the article-that many immigrants from South and Central America are fleeing oppressive regimes supported by the US government (547). As a result, the essay ends on a disjointed and unfocused note that-despite raising a provocative and important point-seems unprofessional and ill-conceived. It almost seems as if <https://assignbuster.com/by-the-time-i-get-to-cucaracha/>

the writer was simply trying to reach a minimum required word count.

On the other hand, by introducing a personal tone and using an example from a popular television show, she probably better succeeds in appealing to an audience that might be put off by a dry journalistic objectivity that immediately introduces the legal issues (545). Ultimately, despite the formal failings of the article, it should be considered a success because it stands a better chance of reaching its target audience. Because it is written in English, one can assume the article is not intended to educate lower-class Hispanic immigrants on the sticky legal issues it addresses. Quite obviously, the author is hoping to reach the younger American readers who are interested in the political issues surrounding immigration, and whose opinions have been shaped by the media misrepresentations that Perez-Zeeb complains about. She accomplishes this in the opening paragraphs by appealing to their interest in a wildly popular television sitcom, and then quickly showing how that television show affects their perspective. The author then very cleverly exploits the common interest in celebrities that most people have to keep them interested so she can pull out her the real subject of the article, which is the revelation of the actual laws involved in plotline of the very story she refers to in television show (545). From this perspective, of course, her use of coarse language, slang phrases and a blog-like tone contributes to the argument that it is an effective piece of writing in terms of being geared to a specific audience.

#### Works Cited

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