Student name

Teacher name

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Optimistically Negative Critique of “Sarah Palin Crusades for Donald Trump”

In a country founded on freedom, liberty, and tolerance, blatant racism and pointed prejudice is unacceptable- unless you are running for President. As the election approaches, Donald Trump amasses more and more faithful, yet greatly misinformed and uneducated, followers; abruptly putting down the tolerance and compassion Americans have worked so hard to achieve. Just when we thought the situation couldn’t get any more insane, crazy was endorsed by even more crazy- and it comes in the form of “head-spinning” Sarah Palin: “This is going to be so much fun.” Promptly following the endorsement, *The New Yorker* tore it to shreds. Amy Davidson made her stance on the endorsement very clear, however the article itself was poorly written. Between the lack of opposing viewpoints and lack of evidence against Sarah Palin, the article did not provide substantial reasoning against the Palin-Trump combo- other than her annoyance. However, despite the article’s structure (or lack, thereof), Davidson still makes a compelling argument, as it points out the unintelligibility of Palin’s speech and the insanity of the whole unsavory situation. Amy Davidson’s “Sarah Palin Crusades for Donald Trump” is the perfect combination of terrible writing, blatant honesty and impeccable timing.

Amy Davidson’s article lacks a claim. Because she had no argument, she was not able to provide opposing arguments or evidence against Sarah Palin’s endorsement. In doing so, she assumes all *New Yorker* readers are not supporters of Donald Trump. While the speech was undebatably comical, Davidson did not take into account audiences that are seeking information on Donald Trump and his political campaign. While it’s no secret that Donald Trump is something of a joke to the political community, some people genuinely want to know more about his platform. Davidson’s article was completely useless in this regard. All of the Davidson’s points made against the endorsement of Trump came in the form of Palin quotes. Davidson did not include facts about either politician, but merely quoted Palin’s most ridiculous comments. Instead of commentating on her political views, Davidson uses the article as an opportunity to point out Palin’s bizarre ensemble, describing her as “a cross between a matador and an extra in “Chicago.” She later depicts Sarah Palin as a babbling idiot with no concept of basic sentence fluency, by pointing out some of her most outrageous quotes, including; “Are you ready to stump for Trump?,” “The status quo has got to go,” and my personal favorite, “the weak-kneed capitulator-in-chief.” Amy Davidson is not incorrect in her assumption that the audience views Sarah Palin as an incomprehensible moron, nor is she incorrect in thinking Sarah Palin is a complete nutjob, unsuited for a political career. However, the gaping logical fallacy of ad hominem in her argument eliminates almost all credibility. By failing to present any real evidence against the endorsement, she gives skeptical audiences no valid reason to support her opinion against Palin and Trump. However, despite the poor writing, the article still clearly portrays Palin and Trump in a politically unflattering light. Not a single intelligent word was uttered in Palin’s endorsement speech (or any of Trump’s campaigns), making both appear to be childish, unprofessional and, above all, stupid; allowing Davidson to make a compelling argument against Donald Trump and Sarah Palin.

While the article itself greatly needs improvement, the timing could not have been more well coordinated. Right when the endorsement hit the media and thousands of audience members, Davidson published her article, while the topic was still trending. Released January 20, 2016, this article was published just days after the endorsement. As Donald Trump gains more political momentum, a public reminder of his under-qualifications for President is always greatly needed. Even though this was a very flawed literary piece, the overall effect was exactly as the author intended- it shone a harsh light on idiocies of Donald Trump. Because of the perfectly coordinated release of Davidson’s article, she was able to make a splash with a much larger audience-base, thus promoting her literary piece to a larger, hungrier audience.

Davidson’s article, while funny, lacked an arguable point of view, and served only for entertainment. Because of this, she was not able to provide an organized and well thought out idea to base her article off of. One issue the paper presented was a biased target audience. She assumed readers were all anti- Trump/ Palin, and didn’t include an opposing viewpoint. Davidson assumed the audience was only reading her writing because, they too, were irritated by the endorsement. The author was unable to sort her thoughts, and the entire literary piece was a jumbled, unorganized mix of irrelevant quotes and opinions. In lieu of a thesis, Davidson simply titles her article “Sarah Palin Crusades for Donald Trump,” insinuating that the core of the article would be information on the endorsement. However, the majority of the article consisted of Palin quotes, blatant mockery and no political references whatsoever- except for praising Palin’s credentials as former running mate to John McCain in his Presidential campaign, and as the former Governor of Alaska. “It is always jarring, watching Palin, to remember, in 2008, Senator John McCain of Arizona, picked her as his running mate.” (Davidson). Being the most politically substantial mention in the entire article, this shows the disorganization and lack of forethought put into the paper. The title of the article suggests informational value on the subject, but disappointed with only meaningless slander. Despite the poor writing structure, Davidson was still able to work in a few somewhat logical points. Once again, her article was saved by the humorous shots taken at Palin. By exposing her outrageous nature, Davidson’s paper’s last redeeming quality came in the form of Palin’s absurd commentary- she, indeed, was “going rogue.”

While Amy Davidson’s exact purpose for writing “Sarah Palin Crusades for Donald Trump” is rather vague, one thing is for sure: Amy Davidson does not like Sarah Palin. Between hurled insults and pointed mockery, Davidson makes her stance on the endorsement extremely clear- the “dynamic-duo” of Trump and Palin is not a successful political endeavor, nor is it brilliant marketing; it’s just bizarre. At one point Davidson dances around the idea of the endorsement being a mutually beneficial tactic to give Trump the “Evangelical Vote”, and for Palin to use Trump’s constant attention in the media to promote her own political career. However, she does not elaborate, leaving the audience, once again, in the dark about the political meaning of the endorsement. Davidson mentions the endorsement as (an pre-speculated theory) being a political tactic, but fails to continue with her speculation. “But perhaps there is a strategy in there… Palin… is still popular in Iowa among the voters who might turn from Trump to [Cruz]” (Davidson). Through this fleeting reference we can see one of Davidson’s few moments of logical substance, however, it lasted for one sentence and did not elaborate, making it an ineffective, yet interesting, point. Because the author did not include a thesis, the purpose of the article still remains unknown. There is no argument, no information on the endorsement, no valid evidence to suede the audience either way, and not enough evidence to propose a theory of the endorsement’s purpose.

The article as a final result was not at all well-constructed. With a few redeeming qualities it was able to stand as a political article, but contained only entertainment value. However, the comedic effect of well-placed Palin quotes made the poorly written article somewhat pleasant to read, and, more importantly, the timing of the article could not have been better. Released just days after the endorsement took place, the topic was at its height in popularity on social media, and the article was humorous. By using eccentric quotes from Palin such as “they are so busted,” and “you’re fired,” Davidson was able to point out the comedic effects of Palin’s speech. With the attention combined with the popularity of the article’s humor, the author was able to widely spread the inherently negative connotations associated with the exposure of Palin’s idiocies. When all's said and done, this atrociously written article still impacted the way Sarah Palin was perceived, which is an accomplishment in itself, yet another redeeming quality of “Sarah Palin Crusades for Donald Trump.”

With some added organization and structure, this article had potential to be great. The author nailed pathos and kairos, but severely lacked logos and ethos. Her writing would be easier to follow and would accomplish more with better organization- however, the article did present the endorsement in an unpleasant point of view, in cohesion with the author’s opinion. Amy Davidson’s “Sarah Palin Crusades for Donald Trump” reached many followers of the Iowa caucuses, while a disorganized mess, was still able to stand alone and shine light onto the ludicrosities of Donald Trump and Sarah Palin. But despite these setbacks, the article was still successful in conveying one dominating message: Sarah Palin is [still] a complete train wreck.

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