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Mr. Gallagher

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Blinded

As an American society we love diversity, but do we use this love of diversity to ignore other inequalities that have developed in America? In Walter Benn Michaels' book *The Trouble with Diversity: How We Learned to Love Identity and Ignore Inequality*, he argues through a mixture of logical, emotional, and ethical appeals, that we as Americans fail to recognize the biggest type of diversity among us—money.

In the beginning of Michaels' book he connects to anyone who has taken English in America by referencing a famous conversation between two well-known literary authors, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemmingway (725). He references these two authors to convey the point that Fitzgerald too believed that the rich were "a special and glamorous race" (726). Michaels also analyzes the well-known book/movie *The Great Gatsby*, and comes to the conclusion that Daisy and Gatsby didn't work out because they were from "different races" entirely (727). Through the use of Hemmingway and Fitzgerald, and the book/movie *The Great Gatsby*, Michaels connects to almost every American by referencing literary icons that are woven into the English curriculum of almost every high school in America.

However, I strongly disagree with Michaels logical appeal about *The Great Gatsby*. His logos fail here because the conclusion drawn—why Daisy does not end up with Gatsby—is

biased and is concluded only in favor of his point of view. I have both read and watched *The Great Gatsby*, and never once came to the conclusion that Daisy left Gatsby because he wasn't of the same "race" (Michaels, 727) or social status. He approaches this conclusion with a blind eye and fails to consider that maybe Daisy didn't end up with Gatsby because her and Tom were essentially perfect for each other, or because Gatsby was asking way too much of her, or finally because Daisy is really a heartless, selfish woman that really doesn't care about anyone else at all. He merely ignores all other possibilities and draws a very far-fetched inference from *The Great Gatsby*, in order to suit his particular interests.

Although Michaels makes a fanciful logical appeal in the beginning of the excerpt, he makes a good ethical appeal when he uses the case of *Bakke v. Board of Regents*, and explains that how the case got people thinking about this new term called "diversity" (727). By referencing this case he is making a connection to most middle to upper age adults who would have heard about this case in the news. This ethical appeal also sets Michaels up to introduce his main point—the love we have for identity and the hate we have for class (728).

As Michaels sets himself up to talk about the meat of his book, he is also building credibility to the audience through ethos. He consistently uses "we" as if he and his readers are like-minded, coming to the same conclusion as he is. This is an effective strategy, because he draws the readers in, as if they're having a conversation with him. Along with Michaels' conversational tone, he uses passionate words such as "love", "hate", and "appreciate" to touch the emotions of the readers. Everyone relates to the feelings of love and hate, allowing Michaels not only to connect to his audience, but to also persuade the readers to feel the same way he does about the equality of wealth. Michaels' passionate and conversational tone also allows readers to

feel, not as if they're being lectured at, but as if both the reader and the author are one, coming to the same conclusion when presented with the evidence laid out in front of them.

As Michaels finally gets to the core of his argument he uses an article from *The Economist* for one last logical appeal. This last use of logos targets the rich Americans to whom he refers to as a different class/race of people (Michaels, 726). He aims this part of the excerpt at the rich and affluent because he is trying to evoke a response and a change in the inequality of wealth. He establishes that the poor really have no power to change this, but instead the power relies in the wealth. By using a magazine that mainly the rich read, Michaels is able to catch the eyes of affluent and resonate a connection with the wealthy.

Through emotional, logical, and ethical appeals Michaels makes a convincing argument that as Americans we ignore the one piece of diversity that can be changed, while we praise racial and cultural diversity in our country. Michaels' rhetoric in the excerpt from his book *The Trouble with Diversity: How We Learned to Love Identity and Ignore Inequality* worked very well as individual parts, however, when put together I often found myself confused and unsure of the relationship from one point to the other.

Works Cited

Michaels, Walter Benn. "The Trouble with Diversity: How We Learn to Love Identity and Ignore Inequality". *Everything's an Argument*. Andrea A. Lunsford. Boston: Bedford, 2016. 725- 730. Print.