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English 250 – Assignment 3

Professor Meredith Smith-Lane

February 13th, 2019

Wooi 1

Check date line
format & order for
heading - you have the
right info, but out of
order.

No underline or
bold needed here -
plain font is
correct formatting

Rhetorical Analysis of "The Way We Live Now: I Tweet, Therefore I Am"

In "The Way We Live Now: I Tweet, Therefore I Am", published by NY Times, author Peggy Orenstein made bold claims against the contrived nature of any given individual's presentation of themselves on social media. Stating, "If you have a Twitter account, how close do your tweets reflect your life at the moment?" (Orenstein 346). By making this claim, it makes sense that the article was intended to reach social media users, which at this age, means a big majority of any reasonably developed civilization. Despite the initial impression of a condescending undertone in the article, Orenstein has provided some convincing arguments to a clear realisation of the harmful ramifications of social media abuse.

Clear articulation
of thesis.

As a demonstration of the ethos argument, Orenstein indicated that this article was written in response to an observation of her own use of social media (347). This would suggest credibility because Orenstein is raising concerns as a fellow social media user and an experienced-based peer. Also, by composing the article in the first-person perspective, the article appears more personal to the author. This made the concerns raised seem more validated and the article more credible as a whole. Then, when she referenced studies and citing learned individuals, such as sociologist Erving Goffman and M.I.T. professor Sherry Turkle (Orenstein 347-348), it shows that the author has done an ample amount of research for this article which establishes reliability, and a trust that the author is adequately knowledgeable on this topic.

In this article, the author narrated a convincing story about how much her life as an author and a mother has changed due to her use of Twitter (Orenstein 347). Here, she was aiming to create an emotional response from the readers, which would then develop an emotional connection. Because of this established connection with the readers, when the author then expressed dejection towards her social media misuse (Orenstein 347), Orenstein was subtly projecting her own feelings and inner-conflicts towards the readers. This would then invoke self-reflection in the readers' own practices on social media. Also, when Orenstein alluded to the erosion of intimate relationships due to the performance culture of social media (348), she was playing on the sentiment that all humans crave personal relationships. By making the point of having it taken away by the misuse of social media, the author has demonstrated an effective use of ~~the~~ ^{Wordy} pathos ~~mode~~ ^{Not needed.} of persuasion.

In addition, when talking about the studies and information brought up in this article, the research conducted by professor Turkle found that social media abuse incites vanity (Orenstein 348). To quote Orenstein's findings, "...*the self was increasingly becoming externally manufactured rather than internally developed,*" (348). With this knowledge, the argument that social media advocates performance culture becomes fact, which adds to the validation of the author's argument of the façade in people's online presentation of themselves. The author then cited a research conducted by the University of Michigan on the decline of empathy, coinciding it with the rise of social media, and making the implicit link between the two facts (348). While it was clarified by Orenstein that there was no direct correlation between the two facts, the consequences of self-promotion over self-awareness made the implication clear (348).

No italics needed here

In short, Peggy Orenstein successfully made her point in her article that while social media definitely has its benefits, abuse can lead to negative outcomes. The effective use of the ethos, pathos, and logos mode of persuasion has led to the conclusion that the author has

fulfilled her purpose of communicating her viewpoint in the use, or rather misuse, of social media. With that said, if anything is to be taken from this article, it is that the practice of moderation in social media use should be put into effect.

Joshua,
Your thesis is clear & well-argued throughout your paper - effective job on content! 😊 If you choose to pre-revise, look to finesse & polish. Include a "hook" to get reader attention at the beginning. See also my notes on MLA, & proofread for wordiness. Write work on this assignment!
AMJ