Tiffany Muse English: 1101

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Literacy Narrative

*For my revision of my Literacy Narrative I focused on fixing the format and layout of my piece. I separated my essay in more coherent paragraphs from how it was originally formatted in one long writing piece. Along with the format I also revised the message that I was originally trying to get across. I was made the focus more clear of the lesson that I learned about hard work and how it is necessary along with being consistent. I emphasized the improvements and effective outcome of hard work in regards to improving my literacy in the areas I struggled in.*

Throughout all of my years in school from elementary to high school English/ Language Arts has always been my best subject. It was always my highest grade and I was always on a higher reading level for my age. It naturally came easy to me up until my junior year when I joined my mock trial team. When I joined the team I was introduced to a new and different side of language, being legal terminology, and how it is and needed to be used. I knew that I wanted to be apart of the team and compete and was even confident enough in myself to try out to be one of the main attorneys instead of an alternate or a witness. It was well known and believed that having the part of an attorney was more challenging and required more work and preparation than having the part of a witness. Mock Trial was a way of acting and playing a part. Whether the part was as an attorney or a witness, you had to be believable and convincing and prepared in order to win.

I tried out and got the part of the attorney, like I originally wanted. I was on the team the year before, but I was not only a witness I was an alternate. This basically meant that I did absolutely nothing the whole competition season and had no need to prepare or learn any of the jargon that needed to be used. I would spend every single practice of that season doing homework for my classes since it was after school. At this time I lost all confidence in what I thought I could do and felt useless. The following year I wanted to make sure I proved myself before I graduated. I tried again and became an alternate… again, but this time for an attorney. At first I started to have ptsd of the previous year and was about to quit thinking I would not get to do anything for a second year in a row. Luckily enough for me the person I was alternating for neglected his responsibilities and was removed from the team. I was consistently showing up to practice and was trying to prepare in an effective way.

 It was getting close to the first competition and I was thrown into this thing pretty late into the game. I had to write a cross and a direct examination which I have never done before and also had to learn different objections and other legal terminology to sound remotely like I knew what I was doing during competition. Standing in front of a courtroom with an immense amount of eyes watching my every move and ears listening to any possible mistakes that may be made. Standing in front of a judge, who was actually just a practicing attorney, the power they still possessed over me and the validation they owned I needed and wanted in return. This was my thought process in preparation for a competition that I had very little time to prepare for.

 I was asked to write my own direct and cross examination for the case we were competing as well as an opening statement, which is used to introduce your side of the case. Needing to be aware of the proper legal terminology to sound like I knew what I was doing required me to learn these words and phrases that were being used that I was not aware of which made me feel unfit and in over my head about being able to succeed in this competition and overall field. As a result I would go on quizlet and review certain terms that were frequently used such as the different types of objections and the wording that was more proper to use when determining what was needed in the case whether it was civil or criminal. I would go over the terms constantly until I remembered what they meant and how they are supposed to be used.

During practice I would have to focus on many different aspects of the language I used having to emphasis every point. Not being aware of these terms put me at a disadvantage since it was my first year actually competing and everyone else on the team had experience from the previous year. This discouraged me at first because of my struggle to learn these phrases for the first time when it was just a refresher for everyone else. Nonetheless, I was determined and continued to work hard on learning, practicing, and perfecting what I needed to in order to compete. I focused and prepared and my team won our round in the competition. I received praise from the judge as well as the attorneys and coaches that worked with my team. This made me feel that all the hard work I put in was worth it and I was able to achieve my goal of proving myself and my abilities being on the team.

This showed me that hard work is something that is very important and crucial in literature when it comes to wanting to improve your skills and abilities. From the consistency that I was able to maintain throughout preparation for competition I realized how effective hard work is, even when it is a subject that has never been a problem for me before. Even though this was not an English assignment or class it was still language that had to be used in a particular way. This was something new to me because English used in law is completely different from the everyday use of the language by an individual. When it came to literacy hard work and practice was key in order for me to succeed.

Annotated Bibliography

*For my Annotated Bibliography I focused on my first source that I used for my genre. I noticed that I discussed different messages that were made throughout the song after I received my grade and comment on my assignment. In order to make it more direct and focused I paid more attention to the main message of the song. As I went through my other sources and examples of my chosen genre I felt that I already focused on the main message of each song more than I did in my first example. Since I felt that way I just made minor changes to ensure that it was clear and I kept how descriptive I was with what I was able to interpret from the artists.*

Cole, Jermaine, “No Role Modelz,” recorded 2014, track 9 on *2014 Forest Hills Drive,* Dreamville, Roc Nation, Columbia Vinyl Crown.

 In J. Cole’s “No Role Modelz,” the topic of the common struggles people face in

their lives and provides an outlook on what truly happens to some people while

allowing those people to be able to relate. Cole focuses on his own personal experiences and problems he faced and how he dealt with and overcame them and changed. Cole starts off the song by saying, “first things first rest in peace Uncle Phil, for real, you the only father that I ever knew,” indicating his lack of a father figure that caused him to stray away from making better decisions causing his need to change in the song. It goes back to the title of the song of not having a role model to show you the way resulting in the need to experience mistakes on your without warning. Cole emphasizes this when he explains, “no role models and I’m here right now, no role models to speak of.” Cole was alone to learn for himself but he is still here showing how he was able to overcome that.

The tone of this song is colloquial and direct. Cole uses phrases a vast majority would understand and relate to while also sticking straight to the story and the process and experience that he went through.

Coolio and L.V., “Gangsta’s Paradise,” recorded 1995, track 3 on *Gangsta’s Paradise,* Tommy Boy

Coolio’s “Gangsta’s Paradise” discusses the life of a gangster and someone that

 comes from the hood. This was a widely talked about topic in 90’s hip hop and

 Coolio got involved in that discussion and representation with this song. The life of

 someone from the hood or an impoverished community is often known to be

 violent and this song goes in depth in the constent crime and murder that is seen

 and experienced by someone that lives in these conditions. Coolio begins the

 song saying, “...But I ain’t never crossed a man that didn’t deserve it, me be

 treated like a punk, you know that’s unheard of, you better watch how you talkin’

 and where you walkin’ or you and your homies might be lined in chalk.” The

 starting line indicates that killing is justified and that everything he has ever come

 across had a reason for happening. He follows that with reassurance that he has

 made a name for himself in his community to the point of respect with no worries

 of becoming a target or victim. He then goes on to share some advice on how

 one would protect themselves from certain situations that often occur in these

 neighborhoods. In the second verse Coolio explains, “Look at the situation they

 got me facin’ I can’t live a normal life, I was raised by the street so I gotta be

 down with the hood team… Got my ten in my hand and a gleam in my eye, I’m

 a loc’d out gangsta, set trippin’ banger.” Coolio is emphasizing what is expected

 of him as a result of him growing up and living in this dangerous lifestyle. He was

 always exposed to this life which was all he knew, he discusses being “a loc’d

 out gangsta, set trippin’ banger,” which means that he is a member of the crip

 gang and he represents it fully to the point of violence. He also knows to always

 be there for his gang since that a gang is often seen as family because it is a

lifestyle that is imbedded into someone starting from a young age. The audience

for this song are people that have grown up in a similar situation that involved

being exposed to a lot of violence and crime. Those that grew up in these situations are able to relate and have a sense of relief that they are not alone and they have someone that is the voice of their struggles. This song can also be aimed towards the people that are unaware of how violent gang life can be. It can be used for the people that want to join a gang for fun or to look cool to see the truth behind it all and fear that ensues of not knowing if you or a friend would make it to your next birthday. This message is emphasized through the use of a candid and cautionary tone. It is straightforward and honest about how gang life is, from the dangers, violence, and fear. As a result of this, it can be used to warn people to be smart about the decisions they make if they are able to have a choice on whether they join this type of life or go in a different and safer direction. This appeals to the audience through Coolio’s credibility to speak on this topic since he has experienced these actions and is well known for being gang affiliated. He also appeals to the emotions of those who have witnessed the loss of a loved one to this type of life and how it can have a negative impact both on the person involved directly and indirectly.

Future and Drake, “Where Ya At,” recorded 2015, track 3 on *DS2,* Epic Records, Sony Music Entertainment.

 The song “Where Ya At,” by Future and Drake explains the problems of not being

able to fully trust people or be aware of someone’s true intentions. In the song

            repetition of the title “Where Ya At” is used to emphasize the purpose behind the

            song. The repetition of the title is followed by different scenarios that show the

            artist change and struggle overtime. This is explained when Future says, “Where

            ya a\*\* was at, dog, when n\*\*\*as wouldn’t feed me? Where ya a\*\* was at, dog,

when n\*\*\*as didn’t need me? Where ya a\*\* was at when I was trapping in the

 store? Had to struggle to get where I’m at and had to sell dope.” This reveals

 how the people in your life may not be there for you when you are in trouble

 struggling or need help but will be there once you become successful and they

 can benefit from you. This song is aimed towards people that have experienced

 a come up and gained success from having nothing and realized how people

             change when you have a large improvement in your life. It is meant for those

             people who are able to relate while also sharing to those not in that position to

             have good intentions when it comes to coming into and staying in someone’s life

             for the right reasons rather than showing up or being present when it's most

             convenient. This message is portrayed using a direct and somewhat indignant

             tone. The artists are conveying their annoyance to the way people tend to act in

             these situations and how it is important to be aware of it. Drake states “where ya

             a\*\* was at when we first got the news? Now your a\*\* back because we’re

             paying back dues, where were you? When all the dogs needed help… where

             your a\*\* was at? I take attendance like a classroom.” Drake is revealing how

             people show up at the right time and that you have to pay attention. By Drake

             saying “I take attendance like a classroom,” he is expressing the importance and

             need to keep track of who you associate with both before and after your success, that

 way you know who is true to you or not. This appeals to people’s emotions learning how

 to avoid people that cannot be trusted. This is something that anyone can relate to

             because you always want people in your life that you can trust and count on to be there

             for you no matter your situation or their potential gain as a result of helping you.

Lamar, Kendrick, “Swimming Pools (Drank),” recorded 2012, track 9 on *good kid, m.A.A.d city,* Aftermath Entertainment, Interscope Records

 “Swimming Pools (Drank)” by Kendrick Lamar explains the battle that a lot

            of people tend to go through with alcohol and the many reasons

            why people may start and continue to use this substance to the point of abuse.

            Kendrick starts the first verse by telling his history and knowledge of its use

            when he says, “Now I done grew up ‘round some people livin’ their life in bottles,

            grandaddy had the golden flask…Some people like the way it feels, some

            people wanna kill their sorrows, some people wanna fit in with the popular, that

            was my problem.” Kendrick is explaining how was constantly exposed to alcohol

            and its use. From seeing it in his neighborhood, friends, peers, and family it

            began to influence him. He makes note of the many reasons why someone

            would begin using whether it was a coping mechanism or just to fit which he

            mentions was the reason for him to start. This song is for people that are able to

            relate if they are either going through this now, went through it in the past or

            knows someone who did. It provides a sense of understanding and allows

            people to relate and not feel alone when it comes to experiencing a really

            important and damaging lifestyle. The song is able to express this using a very

            cautionary tone to warn people how bad things could get overtime while also

            being dignified and direct when discussing such an issue. This appeals to the

            emotion of someone that has experienced this problem before while also shining

            light on what could seem like just having fun but end up becoming a life

            threatening situation. This is brought up more depth in the second verse stating,

           “Okay, now open your mind up and listen me, Kendrick, I am your conscience, if

            you do not hear me then you will be history, Kendrick, I know that your nauseous

            right now and I’m hopin’ to lead you to victory, Kendrick if I take another one

            down I’ma drown in some poison abusing my limit.” At this point, Kendrick is

            aware of how alcohol is negatively affecting him and he needs to slow it down

            before it kills him. Throughout the song, “pour up (drank), head shot (drank), sit

            down (drank), stand up (drank), pass out (drank), wake up (drank), faded

            (drank), faded (drank)” is repeated. This is emphasizing the idea and behavior

            he knew around him that no matter what, you have to drink and that it is the

            answer to everything.

Shakur, Tupac, “Keep Ya Head Up,” recorded 1992, track 11 on *Strictly 4 My N.\*.\*.\*.A.Z…,* Interscope Records

 Tupac Shakur’s “Keep Ya Head Up” talks about the mistreatment of women in

           society along with the overall struggle faced in minority and impoverished

           communities. Although he was aware of these problems and how hard life can

           be, he provided a positive message to “keep ya head up,” stand tall, and have

           confidence in yourself and the possibility for change to happen. Tupac starts off

           the song immediately focusing on women and those struggling by saying, “I give

           a holla to my sisters on welfare, 2Pac cares if don’t nobody else care, and I know

           they like to beat you down a lot… but please don’t cry, dry your eyes, never let

           up forgive, but don’t forget, girl, keep ya head up.” He is explaining to the women

           struggling to stay strong because they are worth more and deserve more. He

           notes how horrible women are treated when he says, “And since we all come

           from a woman… I wonder why we take from our women, why we rape our

 women - do we hate our women? I think it’s time to kill for our women, time to

           heal our women, be real to our women.” Tupac is bringing awareness to how

           horribly women are treated and how it has to change given how important and

           vital women are. In the second verse of the song Tupac shifts topics and

           discusses minorities and the life they live. He shares, “I try to find my friends, but

           they’re blowin’ in the wind, last night my buddy lost his whole family, it’s gonna

           take the man in me to conquer this insanity, it seems the rain’ll never let up, I try

           to keep my head up, you know, it’s funny…, they got money for wars but can’t

           feed the poor.” He is exposing the harsh life of those in smaller and impoverished

           communities and how those people never know when will be the last time they will see a

           loved one. He also explains that despite everyone being against them and the horrors they

           face they have to stand tall. He also focuses on how the government doesn’t care or use

           their resources for the people but instead, uses them for the military. This song is for both

           men and women and anyone that is ignorant or oblivious to the truth and the struggles

           people face on the other side. Tupac is trying to convey a message that there is a need for

           change and people need to take the initiative for it. Women that are hurt can feel support,

           men that are unaware of the pain being caused can make a change, and the people that can

           learn more about how others aren’t given better help. This message is disclosed using a

           benevolent tone towards the women targeted for the song while also being cautionary to

           raise awareness for the problems being faced. Tupac relies on emotion and his credibility

           for this song. He uses his experience with loss and other struggles faced by minorities

           while also explaining the hurt women go through and the need for this change to occur.

Von, King, “Crazy Story”, recorded 2018, track 3 on *Grandson, Vol 1,* Only The Family Entertainment, Empire

 King Von’s “Crazy Story” is the depiction of a normal day in the hood that

Involves the acts of gang activity. King Von explains the process of having an

Enemy from an opposing gang and wanting to get revenge and the steps that

Place in order to be successful in the act. He starts off the song saying, “Got

A drop on this flexin’ n\*\*\*a he from Tennessee, I had a th\*t, she be with the s\*\*t, she told me where he be.” This shows the first step in the process of getting the job done and seeking revenge on a rival. Von uses the targets girlfriend that he knows to easily set him up and get him to be in the area that he wants. Later on in the song Von explains his plan more when he states, “I grab my glock, it been through a lot, but it still shoot like new, we at the top yeah we lost a lot, but that just how it go.” Von is revealing the acts that are taking place with normalized gang violence and crime. Stating that his gun “has been through a lot,” expresses how often he had used it as a weapon either for self-defense for the dangerous area that lives in or for personal vendettas against rival gangs in his home of Chicago, which is known for being a very dangerous city with very high crime rates. He also mentions how he lost a lot but continues to reveal how it is normal for where he lives and life that he has being in a gang and in Chicago. He ends the song revealing how he gets the job done when he explains, “Now I sneak up, crouching like a tiger… Block on fire, so I take precaution, mask on, Micheal Myers… I was born to shoot, I got aim… So I rise, hit one in his arm, hit one in his thigh, this no lie, b\*\*\*h it’s do or die…” Von makes multiple references throughout the song, such as the movie *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon*, and Micheal Myers from *Halloween*. He refers to these to show his strategies for completing his task. He crouches like a tiger to stay hidden and be stealthy and uses a mask like Micheal Myers does in *Halloween* so that he is not identified by anyone as a possible suspect for the crime. Von then emphasizes his ability to shoot and handle a gun showing his experience. Von ends the song with where he aimed and how he shot the person he was after explaining that it was necessary because it was either he did it and aimed at him or he would be the one to get shot at. This song’s audience are those that are familiar with gang life and participate in the lifestyle on a daily basis. From the violence and need to take a life in order to save themselves and constantly being put in that situation. This can also be helpful to those that are unaware of what happens when gang rivalry get’s dangerous and serious, as well as all of the planning that goes into completing these violent acts that are often discussed and brought up in the news. This message is described using a candid colloquial tone in order to relate to the audience and help them easily understand what is being said. It also allowed Von to be honest and straightforward about this particular lifestyle and everything that goes down from the plotting to the final execution. This appeals to the audience through Von’s credibility by showing his experience and knowledge of how this world works in this aspect of gang activity and living in a dangerous city. He also appeals to the audience’s emotions of experiencing this first hand or knowing someone that did.

Work Cited

   “2Pac – Keep Ya Head Up.” *Genius*, 28 Oct. 1993, https://genius.com/2pac-keep-ya-head-up-lyrics.

“Coolio (Ft. L.V. (South Central Cartel)) – Gangsta's Paradise.” *Genius*, 8 Aug. 1995, https://genius.com/Coolio-gangstas-paradise-lyrics.

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“J. Cole – No Role Modelz.” *Genius*, 9 Dec. 2014, https://genius.com/J-cole-no-role-modelz-lyrics.

“Kendrick Lamar – Swimming Pools (Drank).” *Genius*, 31 July 2012, https://genius.com/Kendrick-lamar-swimming-pools-drank-lyrics.

“King Von – Crazy Story.” *Genius*, 6 Dec. 2018, https://genius.com/King-von-crazy-story-lyrics.

Research and Audience

*For my Research and Audience revision I focused on my first audience and the genre that I chose to write in. I chose to write an article so that it was easier for me to reach my audience. While I was writing, I used multiple different articles on the same topic so that I was able to briefly learn how to write in that genre. I was not fully confident in the outcome of the article or how effectively I was able to relay my message to my audience. This led me to go back and revise my wording and format to make the article look like a published piece to the best of my ability, while also making my message more clearly throughout the article. I also made sure to include more information I felt needed to be included for my second audience to make my argument stronger.*

The conversation regarding sexual assault has been in effect for years but has recently received more serious attention as a result of the *#METOO* movement. Justice has been served but only to a certain extent that would not make any survivor or someone close with a survivor feel any safer with the hopes of a resolution and/ or closure. When people are convicted of sexual assault majority of the time the punishment is of the bare minimum. I feel that men that are rightfully convicted of sexual assault should face harsher and more serious consequences. This is an issue that affects women who are survivors, people that fear they may be next, and the legislatures that are in power of determining what a more proper consequence should be for these crimes.

**The New York Times**

**The Lack in Punishment Regarding Sexual Assault**

Opinion

By Tiffany Muse

Dec. 5, 2019 at 4:00 p.m. EDT

Over the course of the past couple of years multiple women have gathered up the courage to come forth and speak out on their experiences with sexual assault in the hopes of getting justice and a sense of relief for the hardships they had to face.

Both women and men are not likely to report to the police when they have been a survivor of sexual assault. Reports have shown that “out of 1,000 sexual assaults only 230 will be reported and that 3 out 4 will go unreported.” Rainn. (2017). Statistics. *The Criminal Justice System: Statistics,* [*https://www.rainn.org/statistics/criminal-justice-system*](https://www.rainn.org/statistics/criminal-justice-system). The amount of reports need to increase to ensure in order to flood those in charge legally to do something that is more effective in how these cases are usually handled.

Women are at a higher risk of sexual assault and often are not quick to report it when it does occur. The reasoning behind this varies from not wanting to be embarrassed, feeling terrified, feeling that nothing will be done, and that no one, especially in the justice system would care. However, something that is often shown and discussed that has an impact on whether a survivor would want to come forward or not is how the justice system treats and handles assault cases. This is why it is important to speak out and be heard about what you have experienced to open the space for more people to come forward to force a change.

There have been multiple examples of convicted rapists that have gotten little to no punishment or just a slap on the wrist. From Brock Turner, David Becker, Nicholas Fifield, John P. Enochs, Austin James Wilkerson as mentioned in Shugerman, E. (2016). 5 Men who were accused of sexual assault and got little to no jail time. *Revelist,* [*https://www.revelist.com/feminism/brock-turner-accused-rapists-no/4577*](https://www.revelist.com/feminism/brock-turner-accused-rapists-no/4577)*.* These men committed assault crimes and were able to walk away as if they have not done anything wrong. It is important to make it known what you have gone through if you or someone you know experienced sexual assault first hand so that this does not continue to happen. Once it is known what you go through as a survivor you can push the start of a change so that other perpetrators do not walk away with no serious consequences.

Something that these cases tend to have in common are the fact that a majority of these men are either fresh out of high school or already in college. The main argument that is made is that they are still young and are often first time offenders which should not be justified when it comes to how an incident of this caliber can ruin someone. This excuse is what sets an example for how other sexual assault crimes are handled when the perpetrator is older. An example of this is mentioned by Dastagir, A. (2019). A bus driver rapes, a man keeps girl captive and neither are going to prison. *USA Today,* [*https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2019/05/03/bus-driver-shane-pinche-wont-go-prison-rape-hes-not-alone/3653181002/*](https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2019/05/03/bus-driver-shane-pinche-wont-go-prison-rape-hes-not-alone/3653181002/). In these cases a New York bus driver Shane Piche admitted to raping a 14 year old girl that rode the bus and another man, Michael Wysolovski admitted to keeping a teenage girl in captivity for over a year. In both of these cases adult men who admitted to these vile acts were not being sent to prison. In these cases the survivors where children and are unable to speak out for themselves. For what they went through and to have their attackers not face a serious punishments can harm them. As a survivor you know firsthand how the process goes and the need to fight for a more effective use of the law and sentencing for these cases. It is important not only for you to feel closure but for those unable to speak out like these girls, while also helping to protect other people from experiencing the same unfulfilling outcome.

When people who have committed these heinous acts have not received the necessary punishments or consequences the wrong type of message is sent to not only other possible offenders that now think they can commit these acts and get off scotch free but to the survivors and their families. As a survivor or someone that knows a survivor it is important to take a stand for something that is so clear to be unjust. No one is able to feel, relate to, or even imagine what is was like to have to go through the process of the attack to your ongoing recovery. That is the power and ammunition that you have to speak out not just for justice against your attacker but to put an end to more potential attackers once they see that they can no longer get off easy for doing this to another human being. You are powerful and have something that no else has to speak on this matter, to ensure that justice is properly served for the harm and distress caused to you.

December 5, 2019

Law Legislatures

Congress

First St SE, Washington, DC 20004

Re: Prison Sentencing Change

Dear Law Legislatures,

A change needs to be made in the sentencing and overall punishment of those convicted of sexual assault. It is well known by the majority that most offenders of sexual assault tend to get off scotch free and never face any serious consequences for the horrid acts they have committed.

 It is shown by Dam Van, Andrew, “Less than 1% of rapes lead to felony convictions but at least 89% of victims face emotional and physical consequences.” *Washington Post, 2018*. Very few sexual assault cases result in a serious felony conviction which may seem good to the offenders, the attorneys assigned to them, as well as other members of the justice system that can easily get through these types of cases. The way these cases are dealt with are for convenience of everyone involved with no regards to the victims of these crimes. As stated in the very same article by Dam, “...at least 89% of victims report some level of distress, including high rates of physical injury, PTSD, depression, anxiety and substance abuse.” These acts have a major impact on the victims and the law does not seem to be aware of that or seem to care. The sentencing and the process for how sexual assault crimes are dealt with start with the respect of the victim and end with the respect of the offender.

It takes a lot for a victim to come forward and they often get scrutinized and told they are lying. For them to be able to get to a point of accepting what happened and the need for justice to make a report and then have to go through the trial process to find out their offender is only facing about six months, which may most likely result in less time served than the original sentence given along with probation. This shows how the justice system does not show its true support for the victim and that needs to change.

These are heinous crimes that show no respect to a person or their own body which hurt and damage them for years and possibly the rest of their lives, however they are not taken as seriously as they should be when it comes to the consequences. When the war on drugs started in 1971 punishments became harsher for those found to be in possession. To this day the minimum sentence for possession convicted of an offense is 94 months and those not convicted of an offense have a minimum sentence of 42 months on a federal level as stated by the *Mandatory Minimum Penalties for Drug Offenses in the Federal Criminal Justice System* *(p.10)*. It is also stated by the *U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs Bureau of Justice Statistics (p.3)* only about 24% of those convicted of sexual assault were sentenced to 5 or more years in prison while 57% served a lot less time.

Those that are caught and convicted of possession face harsher consequences and longer sentencing than someone convicted of sexual assault. That is the problem and that needs to change. As law legislatures you need to change the precedent that has been set by the past sexual assault cases ended with the offender getting a few months jail time with no serious repercussions. The point of the law and the justice system is to serve justice by a due diligence and ensure a safer atmosphere and country. This is done through the making of laws and proper sentencing for certain crimes as a way of punishment to remove criminals from the streets and make it so that no one would want to commit these crimes because of the possible punishment they may face. If you continue to allow such a short sentence for sexual assault it will translate to people believing they would not face any serious time allowing them to feel free to commit these acts without fear of a serious sentence or conviction.

Take this into consideration and focus on what is truly important and necessary terrible crimes should be treated as such through the use of proper and understandable punishment with the thought of the victims and those who could be next in mind.

Sincerely,

Tiffany Muse

Work Cited

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Personal Experience Essay

*I am choosing to include my personal experience essay because it was the assignment I used to brainstorm my ideas before writing the literacy narrative. This gave me the opportunity to put my thoughts together so that I knew what I would write about for the literacy narrative.*

Standing in front of a courtroom with an immense amount of eyes watching my every move and ears listening to any possible mistakes that may be made. Standing in front of a judge, who was actually just a practicing attorney, the power they still possessed over me and the validation they owned I needed and wanted in return. This was my thought process during my mock trial competition my first year. During practice I needed to write my own direct and cross examination for the case we were competing as well as an opening. Needing to be aware of the proper legal terminology to use to sound like I knew what I was talking about required me to learn. Words and phrases that were being used that I was not aware of which made me feel unfit and in over my head to be able to succeed in this competition and overall field. I would go on quizlet and review certain terms that were frequently used such as the different types of objections and certain wording that was more proper to use when determining what was needed in the case whether it was civil or criminal. I would go over the terms constantly until I remembered what they meant and how they are supposed to be used. During practice I would have to focus on many different aspects of the language I used having to emphasis every point. Not being aware of these terms put me at a disadvantage since it was my first year competing and everyone else on the team had experience from the previous year. This discouraged me at first because of my struggle to learn these phrases for the first time when it was just a refresher for everyone else.

Research and Audience Presentation Prep

*I am including what I used to prepare for my class presentation of the Research and Audience assignment. I chose to include this because it was a brief writing piece I did to collect my thoughts before my presentation so that I was properly prepared with what to say. I did not focus on proper formatting or structure it was just an example of how I like to briefly prepare for the presentation so that I was not all over the place.*

Today I will be discussing the topic regarding sexual assault and how it is handled in the criminal justice system. It is pretty well known that this has been a topic of discussion for years and has garnered even more traction in the past 4 years following the #METOO movement. However, what you may not know is the outcome that has resulted from this discussion. A lot of people that have experienced sexual assault tend to not want to come forward. “About 63% of sexual assaults are not reported, leaving only about 37% reported.” given by *National Sexual Violence Resource Center nsvrc.gov* Most of the time when a sexual assault it reported the court process is long a grueling and takes an even larger tole on those directly affected by the crime. They go through all of this courage to report the incident and possible go through with a trial to find out that the attacker is served with about 6 months in prison but will most likely spend less than half that time and be given probation. Since this is something that happens quite often one of the major reasons why people choose not to report these crimes because they believe that nothing will be done, or the police don’t really care. This results in the need for more serious consequences to hold people convicted liable.

*“About a quarter (24%) of offenders released after being sentenced for rape or sexual assault served between 5 and 10 years before initial release; most (57%) served shorter terms than that.”  from U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs Bureau of Justice Statistics* (include for data)

Final Reflection Letter

Dear Professor Jewell,

Over the course of the semester, I feel that I have grown in a few ways as a writer, more as a thinker, and have not grown much as a reader. Throughout the course of the semester, I feel that I changed my writing style. How I started in the beginning with my personal experience essay and literacy narrative. In my personal essay and literacy narrative I focused more on telling a story which is something I tend not to do. For example, how I decided to start off my personal experience essay, “Standing in front of a courtroom with an immense amount of eyes watching my every move and ears listening to any possible mistakes that may be made. Standing in front of a judge, who was actually just a practicing attorney, the power they still possessed over me and the validation they owned I needed and wanted in return. This was my thought process during my mock trial competition my first year.” My goal was to captivate the audience by painting a picture and using imagery to allow the reader to visualize what I saw and felt during my experience that I was choosing to write about. I do not normally write like this especially how I ended the introduction with saying that is what I was thinking and personally how I was feeling.

 Writing like this is not natural for me and that is why I felt that I struggled when I was given this assignment. After reading multiple literacy narratives in class I felt that I had to make mine like a story because that is what the literacy narratives I read were like. After I wrote my personal experience essay I realized that I needed to go back to what I felt comfortable with which prompted me to change and alter my approach towards how to addressed the issue and message I was trying to get across in my literacy narrative. This to me felt like the start of my growth because I knew what I liked and wanted my writing piece to be and how I wanted to go about achieving that. This led to my literacy narrative and the new introduction I had which started by saying, “Throughout all of my years in school from elementary to high school English/ Language Arts has always been my best subject. It was always my highest grade and I was always on a higher reading level for my age. It naturally came easy to me up until my junior year when I joined my mock trial team.” It was slightly better but still needed more revision for the final portfolio.

 By the time we go to the Annotated Bibliography assignment I felt a bit more confident because I have had experience with rhetorical analysis. I had an expectation prior to the annotated bibliography assignment due to what I previously learned.  However, this assignment was not what I was expecting. Being told to pick a genre to focus on and then analyze was different from what I have done in the past. Once I got past that it was what I have done before but easier than before. I was able to focus on a topic and a genre that interested me and that I already had some prior knowledge of. Picking each song in my genre and being able to analyze was something that came naturally to me. This allowed me to develop as not only a writer but as a thinker because this assignment forced me to think about songs I would just listen to for fun in a different and analytical way. This assignment allowed me to show the majority of my growth in how descriptive and detailed I can be, such as how I described Tupac’s message in “Keep Ya Head Up” by saying, He shares, “I try to find my friends, but they’re blowin’ in the wind, last night my buddy lost his whole family..., I try to keep my head up, you know, it’s funny…, they got money for wars but can’t feed the poor.” He is exposing the harsh life of those in smaller and impoverished communities and how those people never know when will be the last time they will see a loved one. He also explains that despite everyone being against them and the horrors they face they have to stand tall. He also focuses on how the government doesn’t care or use their resources for the people but instead, uses them for the military… Tupac is trying to convey a message that there is a need for change and people need to take the initiative for it.

 As a result of this assignment I was able to learn a lot about myself as a writer. I was able to learn how easily I was able to analyze different songs to the point of having my own interpretation and claim of each song while also being able to support it using evidence from the song. I found that I was able to use simple seemingly straightforward lyrics and break them down and analyze them to be something more. This was shown when I used “Where Ya At” by Future and Drake. They constantly used the line “where ya a\*\* was at?” and from that line alone I was able to gather the emphasis that came from this line and it’s repetition to convey the message of being used and wondering where certain people were before they made in the industry and became successful which reveals how people are not always loyal and may be with you for an alternative motive. This assignment made me feel more confident in my writing abilities which prepared me for the Research and Audience assignment. By this point I felt more confident in my growth and ability as a writer. The focus here was to persuade which is the style of writing I am most comfortable with.

 When completing this assignment I was able to go back to what I feel I am best at, arguing a position. However, what I struggled with at first was a topic that I felt would be good to research and advocate for this assignment. After I was certain on my topic and audiences I figured which genres would be most appropriate for each audience. I started with the article and tried my best to make sure my message was clear and effective and was written in the proper format style of a traditional news article. The article was the genre I struggled the most with to ensure it was not just an essay. Since I knew this would be the more difficult of the two genres I chose I used the article as my first draft for peer review. This peer review was the most effective peer review I had and it provided me with a lot of helpful feedback that I worked into my final copy that I turned in pre final revision. Originally I just wrote out the information and did not have my message clear this prompted me to edit this issues and include the proper format and make my message to my audience more clear by stating, “When people who have committed these heinous acts have not received the necessary punishments or consequences the wrong type of message is sent to not only other possible offenders that now think they can commit these acts and get off scotch free but to the survivors and their families. As a survivor or someone that knows a survivor it is important to take a stand for something that is so clear to be unjust. No one is able to feel, relate to, or even imagine what is was like to have to go through the process of the attack to your ongoing recovery. That is the power and ammunition that you have to speak out not just for justice against your attacker but to put an end to more potential attackers once they see that they can no longer get off easy for doing this to another human being. You are powerful and have something that no else has to speak on this matter, to ensure that justice is properly served for the harm and distress caused to you.” This was more detailed and direct to my audience of the message I was trying to portray.

 I have grown as a writer in many ways but have not felt much of a change in my reading or thinking. Unfortunately, as the semester went by less students would be present in class which did not make discussions as interesting. It was always the same group of people participating, with myself included, so I could not get many different perspectives on ideas to alter or enhance my thinking on certain topics. I also feel that we discussed many topics that were very similar to each other which prevented me from being able to think outside of that topic and broaden my beliefs and opinions because it usually stayed the same since the topics and discussions were so similar. I felt the same way about the readings primarily because some of the pieces of literature that we read I was already familiar with and others were fairly similar to each other so I did not personally feel any growth. This was also a result of other people not speaking out to share their opinions so it felt like the same couple of ideas were being shared which left no room to grow.

Despite my lack of personal growth in reading and thinking I acquired many skills in this course from my writing and the discussions we had in class. I have experienced growth and confidence in my writing over the course of the semester as a result of the very different assignments given throughout the semester.

Sincerely,

Tiffany Muse