

Americans and Immigrants

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In the article "The Next American" Tomas R. Jimenez argues that although many fear that immigrants will change our American way of life this is not the case. Jimenez gives many historical examples of what the American people feared in the past and how those fears never became a reality. He goes on to provide illustrations of how American culture is a culture born from many different ethnicities, with a little of everything in the melting pot. He continues to say that America was recognized, when first founded, as a land of opportunity and still is today and that working with immigrants can "rejuvenate" what it truly means to be American. Although I might have wished that Jimenez used personal experiences and statistical data, I feel his argument was ultimately persuasive because he addressed the opposing side very well throughout his essay and speaks of the concerns these individuals might have. I also found his article persuasive because of the professional sources he utilizes.

Throughout his article Jimenez does very well at addressing concerns that some may have who are not of his opinion. He takes into account that some may fear that so many immigrants coming into America might change what America is and what makes us Americans. He addresses this concern throughout the essay by helping us remember the beginning stages of America and further reminds us that everybody was an immigrant when America was first settled. He gives importance to both sides when he helps us recall some historical fears. An example of this is in paragraph four where he brings up the possibility of "immigrants helping the Pope rule America" or that some immigrants might "contaminate the American gene pool". Both of the above fears that people had in the past never became a reality. In paragraph seven he moves on to address modern fears that some may have such as, English becoming less and less the universal American language. Other languages, such as Spanish, appear to becoming* more and more dominant among the population. He beautifully addresses this concern again by using both the past and the present. Continuing in paragraph seven he explains how

languages other than English were looked upon with distaste a century ago and how children might have received a “rap across the knuckles” for speaking a language other than English in their schools. In contrast he continues that today many have come to value multi-lingual abilities and the opportunities they offer. Overall Jimenez did very well addressing and giving importance to the concerns some might have. In addressing the contrasting view he effectively persuades his readers to seriously consider his view.

Additionally, Jimenez adds strength to his argument by his use of authoritative sources. In paragraph six he uses observations made by sociologists Richard Alba and Victor Nee discussing the traditions adopted by Americans from other ethnicities such as “the Christmas tree and leisure Sunday.” He continues to utilize authoritative resources in paragraph ten when he cites a study done by social scientists Ruben Rumbaut, Douglas Massey, and Frank Bean; using expert opinions from these professionals Jimenez is able to confidently address the concerns that some might have of English fading away and other languages taking over. Then in paragraph twelve he again uses a sociologist by the name of David Fitzgerald when addressing the “dissimilation” some immigrants might experience from their own countries as they absorb more and more of the American culture. By using these educated individuals it suggests that Jimenez really took time to research this topic, instead of going to less reputable sources where information is less reliable. By placing these authorities throughout his essay he continues to remind us that this was not just his personal opinion on the matter but that it was also educated and informed opinions thereby creating a very persuasive and credible argument for his audience.

By addressing concerns some may have from the opposing side, using historical and present examples, with authoritative sources I found Jimenez’s article to be highly persuasive. In conclusion I was persuaded that American culture is indeed bettered by having such a diverse population with many adopted cultures and traditions; as a result keeping it’s people versatile and progressing forward.

References

Jimenez, Tomas. (2009). The next americans. In Gary Goshgarian (Ed.), *What matters in America*. (2nd ed.). (pp.258-265). New York: Pearson.