

Sanders Rhetorical Analysis Essay

Journalist, Scott Russell Sanders, in his article, “Staying Put: Making a Home in a Restless World,” states his response to an essay, written by Salman Rushdie, who is an Indian immigrant himself, on the effects of migrations. Sanders refutes Rushdie’s belief that “movement is inherently good,” as well as his enthusiasm for migrating which leads to “people who root themselves in ideas rather than places.” Sanders justifies the importance for people to be inhabitants who care for and respect the area in which they settle in and advocates for people to root themselves to places rather than ideas. Through the use of metaphors to compare the negative effects of migrations, parallelism to put emphasis on the message he is trying to convey, and the use imagery to appeal to the reader’s senses Sanders states his judgement on migration. By using these methods, Sanders critiques Rushdie’s claims about migration and effectively demonstrates why it is better for people, native or not, to root themselves to their location rather than old visions and habits.

Sanders opens his argument by illustrating how Americans have always strived to acquire new land and claim new ground. Using a very nostalgic tone, he describes Americas history of “restless movers” by elaborating that “Our promise land has always been over the next ridge or at the end of the trail, never under our feet.” From his symbolic diction seen in the use of the words “promised land” ,“our” , “we”, and “Americans” the author unites himself with the reader and forms a connection which helps give the reader a sense of importance. This effect also helps create a friendly and inviting tone which manipulates the reader to empathize with the authors perspective on the issue. Continuing his opening, the authors uses parallelism in order to appeal to the reader’s emotions by exemplifying Americans greed for land and its devastating effects. The author uses parallelism when he states how “we (Americans) fish out a stream or wear out a field, or if the smoke from a neighbor's chimney begins to crowd the sky, why, off we go to a new stream, a fresh field, a clean sky.” This plays on the emotions of the reader by bringing to their attention the careless way Americans use and abuse the world and further validates Sanders point that we should “cease to be migrants and become inhabitants, we might begin to pay enough heed and respect to where we are.” Sanders’ connotation of “migrants” implies ignorance of Americans who turn to migrating as the solution to their problems, but his connotation of “inhabitants” implies a more caregiving and humane association between Americans and their surroundings.

Sanders enhances his defense against Rushdie’s beliefs by citing historical analogies and using rational to build credibility to his argument. Sanders argues against Rushdie’s theories by stating that “the worst abuses -of land, forests, animals, and communities-have been carried out by "people who root themselves in ideas rather than places." To embellish his statement, he uses evidence from historical events- such as the Spaniards introduction of slavery, as well as religious and economic factors they brought with them from the Old world to the New- to convince his reader of his reliability by giving logical examples. These

examples also build imagery for the reader of the horrific conditions and treatment implemented, not only on other communities, but on the land itself, which he draws evidence from the Dust Bowl crisis of 1930 to assert his claim. By using historical evidence of slavery and the spread of smallpox disease Sanders gives the reader factual information and a visual representation of the “devastating” affects caused by migration and peoples ideas. This representation also appeals to the readers’ emotion by reminding them of tragic moments in American history which is effective in persuading his audience because it presents such widely known distressing topics.

In Sanders essay, he uses many implied metaphors to make connections and comparisons for the reader to help them better understand his argument. Sanders uses implied metaphor to reject Rushdie’s claims about migrants making new relationships with the world by stating “migrants often pack up their visions and values with the rest of their baggage and carry them along.” This metaphor helps illustrate to the reader Sanders implication about how people tend to take their old habits with them from place to place. This use of metaphor helps the reader better visualize and interpret Sanders argument that people tend to root themselves in ideas and carry those same ideas with them from place to place. Sanders also portrays metaphor through his implication of “cookie-cutter.” When Sanders states, “The habit of our industry and commerce has been to force identical schemes onto differing locales, as though the mind were a cookie-cutter and the land were dough” he uses comparison and analogy to make an illustration for the reader of the imprint human industry has left on this earth, to the effect a cookie-cutter leaves on dough. This interpretation further acknowledges Sanders point by relating to his belief that people should settle down and “pay enough heed and respect to where we are.” With his use of metaphors, the reader can quicker and more easily process what Sanders is trying to convey which continues to sway the reader to seeing the authors perspective .

Sanders’ main reason for writing this essay was to reject Salman Rushdie’s belief that “moving is inherently good, and staying put is bad” and address that people should in fact root themselves to the places they’re in. Sanders ultimately emphasizes the importance for people to put aside their selfish desires and vain ideas and settle down and care for the place they call home. Sanders is able to adequately persuade his audience to agree with his argument by effectively using rhetorical strategies to draw illustrations for his readers as well as provide pragmatic evidence to support his claims. Sanders was able to not only appeal to the emotion of an audience of all ages but maintain an optimistic and respectful tone (not once did he insult or subjugate Rushdie) throughout his argument. Lastly Sanders built a connection and deeper understanding with his readers through his use of parallelism and metaphors which helps the reader have a deeper understanding of his message.