

English A: Language and Literature (HL)

Written Task 2 - Critical Essay

Prescribed question: How and why is a social group been portrayed a certain way?

Number of words in the task: 978 words

## Outline

*Prescribed question: How and why is a social group represented in a particular way?*

*Title of the text for analysis: 'I Am a Bisexual Cuban-American Woman & I Am So Proud of it' by Lauren Jauregui*

*The part of the course to which the task refers: Part 1 - Language in cultural context*

*Thesis statement: Minorities are empowered when we speak openly about their struggles, and the text uses certain diction, tone, and other stylistic devices to persuade the audience about their importance.*

*Key points:*

- 1. Swearing is used to catch the audience off-guard, providing memorability to her arguments, and understand the struggles women have in comparison to men.*
- 2. Complex diction portrays the author as well-versed in the topics she wants to discuss, and also expresses the relevance and gravity of feminism.*
- 3. The author uses an argumentative tone to serve as a platform to discuss these social issues from her own experience, providing a voice for women who have had different experiences from her.*
- 4. Both positively and negatively-charged words were used to highlight the outcomes of political correctness, how it has helped validate the identities of minorities.*
- 5. The text's context is derived from America, and why America divided by partisanship affects how minorities are portrayed in American culture. But by addressing it as simply an invasion of fundamental human rights, Jauregui affirms and empowers the identities of several minorities.*

Prescribed question: How and why is a social group represented in a particular way?

After being outed on Twitter through photos of her kissing another girl, Lauren Jauregui, a Cuban-American singer, officially came out as bisexual through a letter addressed to Trump supporters. The letter depicted several reasons why supporting Trump was the same as siding with corrupt morals, values, and beliefs. The letter portrays a meaningful message through her delivery, addressing the importance of people in minorities, due to how overlooked they are. This critical essay will examine how stylistic devices were used to portray women while taking in the context of the author's background and how it affects this portrayal.

The main focus of this essay will be how Jauregui portrays women and the idea of feminism. In order to understand how cultural context affects the portrayal of minorities, it is necessary to show a brief outline of theories that comprise them. In feminist theory, one core belief is the idea that the world is patriarchal, a male-leaning society and it is inevitable that women be neglected. Feminism argues for a system that emphasizes the equality between both sexes, and in a way overthrows the idea of a male-dominated world. However, Jauregui connects feminism with other social issues such as LGBT rights and racial conflict. This is another part of feminism called intersectional feminism, which acknowledges that all women have multi-layered facets that they have to deal with. Feminism does not only cover the rights of women but also how other identities can create much more stigma and cause unique tones of discrimination.

First, Jauregui establishes credibility as an author by stating the formal definitions of words used in feminist theory: "sexist... homophobic...".

Furthermore, in the context of Jauregui's background, someone who is part of several minorities, being Latina, bisexual, and a woman. Her background shows that she is more than capable of understanding the different meanings of each word and how it applies to minorities. Minorities, specifically, are groups that are overlooked and often discriminated based on a certain attribute. Her usage of negatively-charged words shows the hardships faced by women and other minorities caused by discrimination. Alongside this is her use of swearing: "bitch" and "asshole." The use of the word "bitch" conveys her frustration that women are not respected in the same way men would be, emphasizing the core ideal of feminism, the wish of equality between the sexes. As quoted: "...I will gladly take the label of bitch and problematic for speaking my mind the same any way any man would be admired and respected for doing." Her use of swearing not only portrays a strong emotional feeling, but the custom of it being 'taboo' also catches the audience off-guard and thus makes her arguments more convincing and memorable.

The argumentative tone employed by Jauregui comes in as she explains the importance of politically correct language in making minorities feel heard, how it has slowed down racist language, expressed feminism as a fundamental right for women's validity to be treated as the beings they are, and created numerous labels to assist queer people who felt invalid and invisible. Again, these sentences employ some of the stylistic devices discussed before; formally-phrased words and negatively charged diction, asserting the negative consequences. This further highlights what should be taken action in order to affirm the importance of minorities in providing a much more open and inviting America.

The letter ensures silenced minorities are heard while also establishing a convincing and compelling argument against the voters who defend a

president who, in her words: 'spoke to the parts of you that think you are superior to the rest of us.' The purpose of the letter is also expressed through her tone, especially as she begins to talk about how even as a part of several minorities, she still has privilege due to her skin color. "I have experienced the privilege those genes have granted me, and I am grateful and will continue to speak on behalf of women around the world who do not experience a fraction of that respect because of the color of their skin or what they choose to wear..." In this sentence, Jauregui portrays women as people who have differing identities, experiences that even lead to unique shades of discrimination. The word "grateful and will continue to speak on behalf of women..." suggests solidarity between Jauregui and other women, an example of ensuring that their voices are heard through her own communications. The use of certain words such as 'proud,' 'strength,' and 'resilience' also lend to conveying messages of self-love for one's self, despite sexuality, gender, or other issues that people may look down upon.

It is also critical to address the context of America because this is where the text derives its arguments. It is also where its claims and points will be employed, against extreme right-wingers, Trump supporters. Like most countries, America is a country divided by partisanship, and Trump's values align with a conservative view. In comparison, Jauregui views it as an invasion of rights, not through a partisan lens, a Democratic point of view, as shown in her last lines of the letter, where she states: "...We are screaming battle cries against those whose political and personal agendas threaten our lives and sanity." This shows that because of America's interest in political advantage, a more aggressive view is needed in order to protect fundamental human rights.

Overall, this shows a clear context of an America that is divided by partisanship, affecting how minorities are portrayed in American culture, considering the current sphere of politics, and how it calls for a more radical view of feminism. In conclusion, Jauregui's letter portrays how women have different experiences and identities which may bar them from accessing certain privileges. Jauregui's letter also portrays the struggles of being a woman in order to decrease stigma around that specific minority and give women a platform to be heard.

Word Count: 978 words

Bibliography:

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