Cynthia Lu

AP Language and Composition, G Block

Profiles in Courage

Due Date: 09/20/2017

“*The late Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio was never President of the United States.* Therein lies his personal tragedy.And therein lies his national greatness” (Kennedy, 193). Taft, the former Senator of Ohio never made the cut of being a profound figure that left a significant mark on history. Despite this, Kennedy has personally chosen to highlighted Taft’s courage in his novel, *Profiles in Courage.* Among the seven other figures fore mentioned *Profiles in Courage*, Taft’s expression of courage Kennedy writes touches mid twentieth- century as World War II had come to an end and the Cold War was steadily approaching. The courage Kennedy’s novel speaks of could have been used as a spark of nationalism during times of high foreign tension. Many elements aided the structure of Kennedy’s novel to capture, present, and explain the concepts of courage. His use of tone and anaphora when telling the story of late Senator Taft allows him to illustrate a concept of courage.

One acute aspect of Kennedy’s account of the courage demonstrated by Robert Taft is the tone in which the text is enveloped in. This tone is revealed early on in the section as Kennedy writes, “not even the lure of the White house, or the possibilities of injuring his candidacy, could deter him from speaking out” (193). The respect that drips from this sentence clearly presents Kennedy’s opinion of Taft early on. While many political figures are concerned for their own careers and censor their speeches, “Bob Taft spoke out” (199). This action distinctly earned him Kennedy’s respectful tone as he spoke out against the Nuremberg Trials. Similarly, another tone that incases the text is admiration. Kennedy states, “[Taft] frequently flung to the winds the very restraints his own analysis advised, refusing the bow down to any group, refusing to keep silent on any issue” (194). This shows admiration for Taft’s unbreakable need to speak out against discrepancies to his ideology as it can be “politically costly and clearly futile” (199). Kennedy even recounts his “own very brief service to [Taft]… [Taft’s] strong impression of a surprising and unusual personal charm… with an unflinching courage which he exhibited throughout his …days, that bound his adherents to him with unbreakable ties” (196). Kennedy readily notes on the courage of Taft as he describes his personal impression of meeting him. The tones previously mentioned helps Kennedy capture and explain Taft’s actions as an act of courage. The admiration and respect given to Taft through the tone of the text distinctly captures the fact Taft performed something noteworthy. Additionally, the tones explain why the action Taft executed is courage as courage is usually admire and respected among people.

Another element found in Taft’s story of *Profiles in Courage* is the rhetorical device: anaphora. Anaphora is utilized when Kennedy claims, “Taft had spoken not in ‘defense of the Nazi murderers… not in the defense of isolationism… but in the defense of what he regarded to be the traditional American concepts of law and justice” (204). The repetition of “in the defense of” puts emphasis on what Taft’s stance was during the Nuremberg Trials and rids any misconceptions of what he was truly defending. As Taft’s opinion of the Nuremberg Trials was widely unpopular, stating his stance was figurative suicide in political terms. Therefore, Taft’s disagreement of the death sentence for the Nazis was considered an act of courage as he selflessly put his political credibility on the line to state his honest opinion. Kennedy draws attention to what Taft was defending in order for the connection between courage and Taft’s actions to be more resolute. Additionally, Kennedy uses a flurry of anaphora when he states, “Unlike the acts of Daniel Webster or Edmund Ross, it did not change history. Unlike those of John Quincy Adams, or Thomas Benton, it did not bring about his retirement from the Senate. Unlike most of these deeds of courage previously described, it did not even take plea on the Senate floor… But as an old of plea for justice in a time of intolerance and hostility, it is worth remembering” (196-197). Although his actions are seemingly irrelevant in the course of history, Taft’s display of resolution in the face of hostility and intolerance shines more than a title in a history textbook. His courage is emphasis by the repetition of “unlike” that is setting Taft aside from the other historical figures in *Profiles in Courage*. This draw attention to not only Taft himself, but it draws attention to the courage he displays which was like none other. The usage of anaphora in Taft’s story not only captures the point Kennedy wants to make of the definition of courage, but it also clearly presents it to the readers with its purpose to emphasize.