**Example of an Analysis of ‘Injecting rooms the way to go’ by Steve Price**

In an opinionative article written in the Herald Sun on May 19th 2011, Steve Price urges readers to support the trial of injecting rooms, which has been requested by the City of Yarra in response to the escalating problems of heroin use in Richmond. In an emotive and authoritative tone he emphasises the urgency of adopting this solution, presenting the reader with anecdotal and statistical evidence. By providing the benefits to the community, it would seem that he is particularly addressing those people who have little tolerance for drug addicts and would immediately reject the idea.

Price opens with reference to current figures on the road toll drawing attention to ‘the dreadful waste of life, ‘people needlessly cut down in accidents’ and he raises the difficulty of solutions with a sense of urgency, ‘people continue to die’. He uses this comparison with the road toll to introduce the not so much publicised heroin problem, describing it as ‘an equally depressing statistic’. In an authoritative tone he refers the reader to 1999, using hyperbole to describe the situation then as ‘Melbourne’s heroin epidemic’ and ‘that war against heroin’, alarming the reader and preparing them to consider the idea of injecting rooms.

Price continues to use evidence from that time to demonstrate the adverse effect on the community. He capitalises on the current ambulance crisis to foster a fear that paramedics’ time will be taken up with ‘injecting unconscious addicts with Narcan’ to the detriment of people with ‘near fatal heart attacks’. The futility of their work is emphasised by both the anecdote of the young mother ‘who verbally abused the young man trying to save her’ and by the paramedics reported exasperation, ‘medical saviours so sick and tired of spending their days rescuing addicts’. Price’s personal account of this experience invites the readers to bear witness to this wasted usage of their time and by implication see the benefits of the injecting rooms. The butcher’s complaint provides yet another example of the effect on the community of heroin users, with the repetition of the phrase, ‘sick and tired of’ having to chase junkies away’, highlighting the frustration of no real solutions and a reminder of the damage to the community.

Price’s tone becomes alarmist as he moves back to the present, fearfully warning the readers that ‘we are headed back to the bad old days’ and the problem is ‘hot as ever’. Inclusive language is emphasised with the repeated use of ‘we’ to promote the idea that it is a community issue and the reader is involved. Up until this point, three quarters of the way through the article, Price has played to the reader’s self interest, strongly suggesting that he is addressing those who have little concern for drug addicts but he does eventually turn his attention to their plight eliciting the reader’s compassion in a highly emotive appeal. The drug addicts are described as ’young girl or boy’ and their dismal situation is dramatised, ‘at the end of a dark and lonely laneway’. Anyone who wants to dismiss them now is ‘barbaric’.

The structure is important in the development of the argument as Price provides selected evidence guiding the reader’s response. The notorious Kings Cross is provided as an example of where injecting rooms have been operating for 10 year. No more is said but the next paragraph reports that the Police Minister ‘has already ruled it out’ forcing the reader question the wisdom and logic. The criticism, ‘without even conferring with his Premier… or any of his colleagues’, paints him in a very bad light showing him to be dictatorial and undemocratic, qualities the reader would want to dissociate themselves from.

The rhetorical questions, ‘What have we got to lose?’ and “Why accept even one unnecessary drug death?’ enable the reader to see the logic of his carefully crafted argument. Words with powerful positive connotations are used to describe the injecting rooms, ‘rehab counselling centre’ and ‘a medically safe place’ and the addicts are ‘people weakened by addiction’. The readers’ approval is declared ‘a small price to pay’ and they are given no option but to agree. The final rhetorical question reassures the readers that injecting rooms are consistent with other already approved treatments and flatters them into believing that they are a part of ‘doing that little bit more to save lives’.

Price has carefully constructed the argument for injecting rooms by demonstrating to the reader the benefits for the community, appealing first to their self interest and then later to their conscience and sense of moral responsibility. He is careful not to alienate the reader in such a divisive issue and by providing selected evidence and dramatic anecdotes along with strong emotive language, he guides them to drawing their ‘own’ conclusion that injecting rooms are the ‘way to go’. His colloquial language and the inclusive ‘we’ throughout the article work to align the reader with the writer, showing that he has the same concerns as him and this serves to allay any hesitation they might have with the idea of injecting rooms.