

Here is an example of a critique to give you an idea of what they look like. Notice that it is written in third person, not first. Also, even though you are only using one source for your critique, you still must include in-text citations.

The article entitled “‘Liberal Bias’ is a Myth” by Gabrielle Williamson is about how President Bush doesn’t get the bad media press on certain issues whereas some liberals do. She claims that Bush has misled the American public by using tax dollars to have a conservative columnist named Armstrong Williams promote Bush’s “No Child Left Behind” act. In addition, Williamson says that two other health programs Bush has promoted have violated two federal laws by generating “fake news.” She goes on to accuse Bush of having a poor work ethic, as well as stating that the Bush administration should be investigated for other suspicious acts (10). Because of the poor background information and lack of fact to back up her claims, Williamson does not provide us with a well-written article.

Williamson’s article gets off to a rocky start when she fails to provide sufficient background of what she is accusing President Bush of doing. She accuses Bush of “using our tax dollars for public relations efforts disguised as journalism to sell policies he won’t even fully [support]” (Williamson 10), yet she fails to provide specific examples in a clear, concise fashion. Failure to provide a solid background causes readers to question her authority on the subject. Following the previous statement she writes: “the nearly quarter a million dollars paid to conservative columnist Armstrong Williams to promote No Child Left Behind is not an isolated incident” (Williamson 10). Because there are no specific details to build on in regards to what the controversy is with Armstrong Williams, readers are left confused on why the event is considered so serious of why they should even care.

Another reason that this article is not convincing is because Williamson neglects to use ample facts and statistics to back up her accusations. For example, she accuses Bush of blurring the line between “biased press and free press” (Williamson 10), yet avoids using specific examples of how he blurred those lines, leaving readers, again, questioning her authority on the subject. In addition, she

poses many questions of other acts Bush has supposedly done that should be investigated. A specific question she poses states: "Aren't the Republicans supposed to be the ultimate guardians of our tax dollars?" (Williamson 10). In the following sentence, she then claims that "at least that myth can be laid to rest, as recent numbers indicate that the deficit is continuing to grow" (10). Rather than using sufficient support to back up her assertion about President Bush, she uses the phrase "recent numbers" (10) and fails to present the specific statistics she is referring to. Her article, and argument, would have been much more solid if she had presented these facts and helped herself seem more credible to her audience.

To further spoil her integrity, Williamson follows those statements with another accusation, writing: "They've undoubtedly hired a public relations firm to counter that one, too" (10). This comment comes across as accusatory, and further alienates the readers, particularly when she fails, again, to back up her claims. The piece concludes with Williamson questioning whether President Bush's reputation will be tainted to the Armstrong Williams controversy. She believes that Bush's "rap sheet of questionable episodes" (10) should be enough to hurt his credibility. If there is one positive that can come out of this piece, Williamson does finish it well, wrapping up the article in a conclusive fashion; however, it isn't enough to overshadow the significant lack of evidence and background information.

Williamson provides an interesting insight on why President Bush doesn't get the bad reputation she thinks he deserves. However, the failure to fully support her assertions with compelling facts or cutthroat evidence leave her efforts failing, as well as leaving her authority on the subject in question. Had she provided a more solid background on the Armstrong Williams debate and generated more facts to support her accusations against Bush, the article and her credibility would have been greatly improved. The lack of solid evidence is what ultimately causes her article to be considered badly written.