

8-14-2011

A Life of Definition

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Recommended Citation

Martino, Christine, "A Life of Definition" (2011). *Bucknell Believes*. Paper 67.
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Christine Martino

This I Believe Essay

A Life of Definition

I believe in a life defined. The definition of the word define is to give meaning to an act or object. Since the seventh grade I have suffered from severe depression and anxiety. Amongst a host of quirks that these disorders have instilled in me, one of the most prominent is my obsession with definition. I live a life full of definitions and meanings. Whether it's what someone says or a simple gesture, such as a nod or a wave, I search for the meaning behind these words and actions. Often times my desire to find meaning leads to overthinking and overanalyzing; however, it has also led to exciting and interesting incites about a friend, teacher, parent, therapist, etc. I believe that the longing to define the unknown or the hidden is one of man's greatest traits because it is through this that science, art, literature, and almost every field of study have developed.

It is from defining that we produce meaning and meaning holds great power. From meaning stems hope and I believe that hope makes the world go round. No matter how large or important this stemmed hope is, hope is what forces people to move. For example, when a girl likes a boy she will often search for hidden meanings that the boy reciprocates such feelings. When the boy waves, smiles, or nods to this girl, she will search for the meaning in such a gesture and regardless of whether there is any true meaning to the gesture from the boy's perspective, the girl can produce hope for herself. Hope creates the desire to better oneself, one's community, one's world. It creates the will to not only live, but the will to be great. I have many times lost that hope which sustains the will to live, but it is through finding meaning in simple things that has refueled my hope for tomorrow.

Definition is a funny thing because anything and everything can be defined. However, definition changes from person to person and each person can find a different meaning in the same act or word. It is from definition that many things like hope and meaning come. However, definition also produces belief. Values and beliefs come from how a person defines the unknown and known. The world would not be the same and humans would not be the same if it were not for this great power of definition. Through definition, this I believe.