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Argumentative Essay

Intellectualism; what does it mean? It is the way you interpret your academics. Graff, in his article “Hidden Intellectualism” gives a good view with valid explanations in regards to the way that people see intellectualism. He also states in the way that some people learned to adapt to it.

To start off, Graff uses the key terms “street smarts.” People seem to think that having street smarts is a complete waste of time; yet, they make you wiser. In life, we are all required to be proficient in everything that we do, regardless how complex it is. There are people out there that are unable to cope with so much academics due to the fact that they are involved in other things. “We associate those street smarts with anti-intellectual concerns.” I believe Graff used this term to explain why you will not be able to think outside the box; you need street smarts! Having low grades and higher knowledge in street smarts is what has been happening to this generation. What people do not understand is that we need those street smarts to balance everything out. We would not be able to build up certain thoughts, not think outside the box, without having that different glimpse of mindset. It helps to become intellectual, in all ways.

In addition, Graff used his own story to prove his point; anti-intellectualism does benefit you. “I hated books and only cared for sports,” is what Graff said. This factor came upon the thought that being involved in something you actually like can help you academically. I believe this is true because you are able to use the passion you have for the game, into passing your classes. It is actually a very smart idea. You would be unable to play your sport without missing grades, so this proves that street smarts have a toll on someone. In paragraph eleven, Graff states how street smarts out-do everything else. In my opinion, this statement is very much true. Without the adventures and knowledge you have outside of the page book, you would not be academically ready. The depths of the streets have a balance in our academics; Graff has said it multiple times in this article. In my mind, we should value both of these methods. Going by the books might seem like the right thing to do, but they will never teach you the hidden steps.

To conclude, Graff used the phrase, “School competition, in short, reproduced the less attractive features of sports culture without those that create close bonds and community,” to sum up the fact that everyone is at play to win the top spot. In paragraph fourteen, Graff tries to detail how the schools are usually wanting the people to focus just on the books; but why? The reason for this is because the people see how much attention is being paid to the “insignificant” things, and paying less attention to the testing and the grading. Graff calls this “grade grubbing.” I believe he is right due to the fact that the people are now starting to realize that they need street smarts in order to get the actual criteria to be competitive.

Overall, I agree with what Graff has to say about hidden intellectualism. I do believe that you need to have more than just books smarts to succeed; everyone does. We will not have the sufficient potential without the street smarts. In life, you will not be handed answers, you have to actually take the time to look for them. This is where the “anti-intellectualism” comes in. If we lived out lives based on the academic books, there would not be a reason in failing; there would not be failing, as a matter of fact. Graff stated in his article that he “failed to see the parallels between the sports and academic worlds,” this means that he too thought that there should be some type of street smart involved with his academics. For me, street smarts are not potentially what I know best, but if did not question everything in a different way; my nose would be caught between step 1 and step 2. If you ask me, there would be no intellectualism without the street smarts, just like Gerald Graff said.