Animal Cruelty in Slaughterhouses: Analytical Essay

Every human on earth has his or her own opinions in any type of conversation or argument. These opinions can be shared in person or on the web in the form of videos, blogs or any form of communication. One intent of an author sharing his or her thought's and opinions, is to encourage or persuade the audience to agree with their belief and gain support in whatever the matter may be. For this, I chose a web text article to rhetorically analyze the authors intent and how they used different appeals to connect with the audience. Pigs boiled alive and chickens freezing to death in lorries: Shocking report reveals 4,000 severe breaches of animal safety rules at Slaughterhouses in two years, was on the issue involving animals being subjected to animal cruelty, specifically for factory farmed animals. The author, Matt Hunter, argues that millions of animals every year in slaughterhouses are being subjected to disease, disgusting conditions, and awful animal cruelty. To make the audience sympathetic to his cause and his belief that animal cruelty (even in slaughterhouses) is wrong, he uses the three different appeals of pathos, logos and ethos. He uses pathos as a way to emotionally connect with the readers and earn their support, logos to show the numbers or animals being harmed and show the statistics, and ethos to provide credibility so the audience will believe his claim.

Matt Hunter is a press officer who lives in London for multiple news platforms such as: Yahoo, NBC News, CNBC, New Zealand Herald, Daily Mail, Eastern Daily Press, Duluth News Tribune, East Anglian Daily Times, Ipswich Star, Lowestoft Journal and Spectrum News according to Muck Rack. A press officer is a person who is employed by different organizations to act as their focal idea of communication for the media, who act as the official representatives of the organizations and handle all matters concerning to the press. He is known for his work as the team leader for The Co-operative Group in London. He is also known for having written several articles on his own on many subjects such as: animal cruelty, teachers' pay and conditions, and fugitive thieves. In each article that he writes, he presents his arguments and hopes to gain the audiences support just like any other author would.

The most prevalent technique Hunter uses to gain audience support is the appeal of pathos. One way he uses this appeal is by showing images of animals being subjected to maltreatment and essentially tortured before being slaughtered for meat. The pictures he incorporated into his article are very gruesome and shows how innocent animals are suffering. The intent of using these images is to gain his audiences sympathy for the animals, thus gaining sympathy for his belief. He is hoping that by seeing the maltreatment of animals being sent to the slaughterhouses, the audience will agree with them on what they have seen as unethical. Another way he includes pathos is by simply using it in the way he writes. His sentences describe emotional tragedies these animals are facing and how it impacts the audience is hit hard with the emotional appeal. One example from the article stated, "The report found there were thousands of serious breaches of animal welfare regulations, including chickens and pigs being boiled alive and cattle freezing to death on lorries" (Hunter). Sentences like these not only make the audience aware of the problems but also make them feel strongly about it by using key words like: "boiled alive or freezing to death" (Hunter). It encourages them to take action and support his cause, which is the overall intent of writing the article.

Along with pathos, Hunter uses the appeal of logos to back up his statements. If he were just to

include the emotional appeal, his article would not show the severity of the issue to its fullest. He gives factual statistics in his article; for example, “In the past few years, animals have been exposed to cruel environments and shocking deaths over 4,000 cases have been reported which has caused an ongoing investigation” (Hunter). By offering the number of how many animals are being subjected to the harsh mistreatment, it is easier for the audience to see just how drastic the issue is. He gives out a lot of factual and statistical information to show that he has done his research and isn’t just making numbers up. Some more factual information he gives to bring the audience in includes the fact that, “In 600 cases, animals arrived at slaughterhouses already dead” (Hunter). Furthermore, he goes into depth of the percentage of meats that are contaminated which is around 80. Steering away from the animals’ lives being taken, Hunter hits the audience hard with the amount of human lives lost due to the consumption of spoiled or inedible meat. He states that consuming contaminated meats causes illnesses in humans that make them become very sick and even sometimes cause death. He includes the number of human deaths which is approximately 100 people per year that occur from this issue and is specific in all of his factual evidence. By giving out this information and providing multiple reasons of why the issue is a concern, he strengthens his argument. By combining facts and the emotional appeal, Hunter manages to create a very strong appeal for his cause and has most likely gained the support of the audience. However, there is one last key element in his article. This is the appeal of ethos which the author incorporates to gain more credibility.

Hunter uses ethos in his writing as a means of convincing his audience that he is a credible figure and what he has to say is reliable. Hunter is not a very well-known author or blogger, so in order to show he is credible he gains the support of others who have already established credibility. For example, Hunter uses ethos by including groups like the FSA who are well known and are supported by millions of people. He also includes statements from them to back up his arguments such as, “there will be zero tolerance” to this type of animal cruelty industry. In addition, he has also gained other support from The Commons Select Committee for Environment and Food and Rural Affairs. The chairman of this Committee, Mr. Parish, has come up with several statements about how he feels about animal cruelty even if it’s in the slaughterhouses. Parish has been documented saying, “There is no place for animal cruelty at any stage of farm production-including the slaughterhouse, this country prides itself as having some of the highest animal welfare standards in the world. It’s vital the authorities crack down on any abuses and ensure there is zero tolerance to any mistreatment of animals when slaughtered” (qtd. in Hunter). With the support of these credible groups and statements from them, Hunter has succeeded in creating a well-structured argument throughout his article.

Hunter has managed to blend all of the appeals together to keep the audience’s attention. He mixes in fact with emotion and backs it up with credible sources to support his claim. By not simply focusing on pathos, ethos or logos individually, Hunter has managed to gain the audiences support in his belief that animal cruelty in the slaughterhouse is unethical and must be stopped.

Throughout the entire article Hunter has unique ways of pointing out to the audience the important points that he is trying to come across. He structures the article by including images and videos to show what exactly is occurring in the slaughterhouses to try and grasp the audience’s attention towards a matter that is very important to him. In addition, he also formats the article by using bullet points and bolding the most important occurrences that have happened to these poor animals. By using the technique of bolding some of his sentences,

Hunter can highlight the key points. This is helpful for those audience members who want to skim through or just quickly understand what he is arguing. Another writing technique that is displayed in his work is the word choice that he uses and the tone. His tone is very informative and persuasive. He uses words like brutal, serious and urgent instead of softer words like hopeful or peaceful. He isn't sugarcoating anything and gets the point a crossed by arguing that animal cruelty at the slaughterhouses is unethical. All in all, his tone that he chooses to use is meant to get the point across and to gain the audiences sympathy and support.

Like all authors, Matt is entitled to his own values and beliefs. In the article regarding animal cruelty in slaughterhouses, he is biased in his belief that this issue is wrong and must be changed. He is not open to any other ideas that would go against his claims. One can look at his points given on the matter and argue the exact opposite of what he is supporting. For example, Hunter states that animals are being killed even before they arrive to the slaughter houses. However, if they are going to be killed for meat in the end should it matter if they arrive alive? Or, Hunter also states that hundreds have died from contaminated meat. It is possible the animals could have been sick before even arriving to the slaughterhouse, or some other factor could have caused the deaths. There are many ways to dispute his claims and create an argument. After all, everything is an argument. Along with him being biased he also incorporated a few fallacies that depreciate the arguments validity. A Post Hoc fallacy is when something is assumed and one thing happened after another which makes it occur as a result of it. Hunter in the article assumes that animals being tortured become sick before they are slaughtered. Thus, humans that have eaten the meat of the infected animals are becoming sick to and "over 100 die yearly" (Hunter). As mentioned before, the animals could have already been sick upon arrival or the humans getting sick could have gotten it from another food source. There are a lot of loose ends in his deduction, which is why this is a key fallacy in his article. However, other than that one Post Hoc, Hunter manages to stick with hard facts and evidence to avoid any other fallacies.

Overall, Hunter has managed to write a very convincing article that gains the support of his readers and entices them to take action in supporting his cause. Through the use of the three appeals (ethos, logos, and pathos), he has created a well-supported and well-rounded document. By ensuring he has used each appeal correctly and interchanging them, the document flowed nicely and wasn't focused on too much fact or too much emotional appeal. In addition, his tone kept an authoritative demand which helped his readers understand exactly what he wanted and what his intended purpose was. With the use of writing techniques like bolding and word choice he backed up key points and kept the readers interest. Although the author was biased in his opinion that slaughterhouses are unethical and need to be stopped, every author is entitled to his own opinion. He did everything in his ability to display his opinion and have his voice heard by avoiding fallacies and properly using his appeals. Overall, Hunter has managed to create a well-rounded article.

Works Cited:

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