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Mercy Corps’ Campaign to End World Hunger and Poverty

World hunger and poverty seem to be an immovable force throughout the course of human history. Throughout the entire existence of society, there has been poverty and hunger and no matter what people try to do to stop the spread of this monster, it seems to come back bigger and more powerful than ever. One of the major issues with stopping world hunger and poverty is the fact that most people in the developed world do not know how they can objectively help stop the spread of hunger and poverty across the world. However, in the world of modern technology, there are groups that have been able to produce content which provides the public with an outlet in which to contribute to stopping the horrific monster of hunger and poverty. The artifact that was chosen that discusses the ideas that will be touched on in the Common Good Project is an article by Mercy Corps that touches on how incredibly destructive hunger and poverty are across the world. The article highlights these points by introducing the reader to both photographs as well as statistics on poverty and hunger which give the audience a more concrete and tactile example of the damage that it causes.

Throughout reading the article by Mercy Corps, I began to analyze the appeals that were being used to generate support through the movements. The use of the appeals ethos, pathos, and logos were used in varying degrees but all three played a role in effecting change for the organization and its cause. Using the appeals of ethos, pathos, and logos is a good way to analyze a reading because when one is informed on what the three appeals are used for then a reader is more equipped to look at certain information with a unbiased eye. I began to take these appeals and use them to objectively analyze the information to determine whether the organization was being truthful and transparent in their cause or if they were simply playing on the emotions of the public.

Pathos is the appeal that is more evident when reading the article about hunger and poverty and how the rest of the world can help stop it from spreading. Throughout the article, there are graphic photographs of children and others who look sad, emaciated, and downtrodden. These pictures can instill a sense of sympathy in the mind and heart of the reader, prompting them to make steps to contributing to helping make a change to stop hunger and poverty around the world. In the beginning of the article, there is a chart that shows how poverty is a tragic cycle in that if a person grows up in poverty then their children will also enter into this cycle and it is a constant pattern for almost all people across the world. This chart could relate to certain people who may have been in poverty when they were younger and were able to break the cycle for their children and this might cause them to support the cause of the Mercy Corps to prevent more people, especially children from entering into the tragic cycle.

The article also generates a fair amount of ethos from the credibility that is created with the organization. Mercy Corps is a non-profit organization that has given aid to countless people and in countless places for years and that sense of authority in this field is felt throughout the article. They constantly use the first person plural form of words when discussing certain initiatives which present the organization as a unified group rather than individual people which could allow people to become more likely to follow them and become a part of the group. Another aspect of the article that builds ethos is the constant use of updated statistics that highlight shocking facts that support the claims made. When the Mercy Corps presents the statistics it gives the readers a more objective reason as to why they should listen to the organization and support the claims being made.

Logos is also used in the article especially when Marcy Corps is giving ways to help stop hunger and poverty. Further in the article, there is a section that lists the different ways to help fight against world hunger and poverty. The different ways that help fight against world hunger and poverty are bolded at first to give a broad overview of the certain tactic used but then there is a description of what specifically the Mercy Corps does to achieve this certain objective. This gives the readers a more concrete explanation of the overall goal of the Mercy Corps which allows people to clearly understand what exactly is needed to be done to stop world hunger and poverty. Another thing that Mercy Corps does at the end of the article is give people ways that they can help solve the various problems stated previously. Giving ways to easily help a major problem gives people an encouraging push to make a change because people often feel that they cannot possibly make a difference for something so wide spread and equally as destructive as world hunger and poverty.

The usage of poverty and hunger throughout the article highlights a certain perception of the subject; the fact that it is a very serious monster that needs to be defeated but never stays down. In the article, the words poverty and hunger are almost always placed synonymously together. This creates an air of power around the idea of poverty and hunger because they become an even greater threat together than if they were to be portrayed separately. This can be a daunting task for organizations like Mercy Corps because often poverty and hunger do go hand in hand and both are serious problems that need to be resolved. However, the continuous usage of poverty and hunger together can really hurt the chance of motivating other to join the collective of those who want to make change because they feel that they will not make a difference.

Even though there are many facts and sources throughout the article, there are some logical fallacies that the Mercy Corps falls victim to throughout the piece. One fallacy that the Mercy Corps often uses is hasty generalization, where they will often group things together that may not be totally true. The largest generalization that is made is the relationship between hunger and poverty with a country being developed. The article states that large amounts of hunger and poverty come from developing countries however it neglects to state how there are massive amounts of hunger and poverty within developed countries as well. The war on poverty and world hunger is one that will have people donating millions of dollars in relief for those in developing countries but those same people will turn a blind eye to those that are encountering the same issues in their own country. Audiences are quick to preach about how other countries need help battling hunger and poverty but they are in denial that their very own country might have the same issues as those in developing countries.

The effect of the article on the audience can range anywhere from shock and horror to pity and sympathy. The article is able to portray the subject of poverty and world hunger in a way that is very dehumanizing to the effected people. Most readers will often feel that these people who look emaciated and sickly are too far off in another land for them to actually make a difference. The pictures that are used throughout the article can instill a feeling of sympathy and pity for those effected especially if the reader is a parent and they are witnessing a child go through the hardships that no child should ever have to go through.

One thing that the article does extraordinarily well is how it brings the broad concept of world hunger and poverty back down to a level that seems to be more manageable. Often when audiences read stories or see commercials on television about people suffering from hunger and poverty, the audiences will feel that they could not possibly impact in a way that would help those people. Furthermore, when people are handed statistics that are frightening and horrific, they will feel like their one contribution would not make as big a difference when compared to the grand scheme of the situation. However, what the article does to combat these feelings of helplessness is to provide the reader with easy yet effective ways for them to instill change in the world to help combat the problem of world hunger and poverty. When audiences are given a route in which they can help a cause with little to no risk to their own safety or general comfortable living, they will be more willing to take an active role in participating in helping the cause that the Mercy Corps is trying to popularize.

The article was a perfect example of the different rhetorical appeals ethos, pathos, and logos and how they get the public to support the cause of stopping world hunger and poverty. World hunger and poverty is something that people often view as a war not worth fighting for because it seems to keep coming back every time there is a new revolution for change. However, groups like Mercy Corps allow for small victories to be one domestically as well as worldwide. The main reason hunger and poverty have stayed well past their welcome is because people feel that they cannot possibly win when nothing could be further from the truth. All that is required is for people to stand a unified group to allow for more and more people to join and soon the world will be a place where children no longer have to be hungry and generations of families will no longer need to live in poverty.

Works Cited

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