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What the Health

In the documentary, *What the Health*, Kip Andersen and a team of creditable doctors uncover and deal with the fallacies of diet and disease. People have the thought of humans being omnivores, but in all reality, that is not the case. Human teeth are proof that they are not supposed to be eating meat. For example, unlike a lion, human teeth are flat, and meant for strictly plants, although some could have pointy teeth. This documentary gives facts and reasons to switch to a plant-based diet. *What the Health*, documentary about the truth behind major diseases and how an individual can possibly reverse them and or prevent them, persuades the viewer using ethos, pathos, and logos.

The film is about Kip Anderson, a vegan, that is curious as to why people are getting chronic diseases. He also searches for ways to prevent them. Throughout this film, Anderson goes to various health related associations with questions about a healthy diet, unfortunately, none of the organizations could satisfy his inquiry. Also, there are real people with stories that testify to Anderson's research. He is determined to spread the word about healthy lifestyles and diet.

This documentary uses heavy ethos, establishing their character and creditability in order to influence people (Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz 40), to persuade the viewer. Throughout the

documentary, there were very creditable doctors. One of which that appeal to the viewer in a jokingly, yet serious manner was Dr. Milton Mills. He expressed that, “we [doctors] are in the business of treating sick people, not in the business of preventing sickness” (Anderson) to make the viewer question the community. To back up this documentary and make the viewer be even more persuaded, Kip Andersen requests for various interviews with big organizations like American Diabetes Association, Susan G. Komen, and American Heart Association. These organization’s ethos was teared down in the viewer’s eyes, because the interviews about the health concerns were either cancelled with no reasoning or was an argument. During arguments with organization representatives, Anderson built up his ethos, he was calm and still respectful. One thing that destroyed the view of the American Heart Association was them to recommend recipes for foods that apparently causing chronic health diseases. Also, athletes and regular people share their stories and how much better their lives have become by changing their diet to plant-based. These examples of ethos help the documentary to build its creditability to persuade the viewer.

Apart from ethos, pathos, using emotion to appeal (Lunsford, Ruskiewicz 23), played a big part in persuading the viewer that a meat-based diet is unhealthy and sickening. The documentary starts off with Anderson expressing why he decided to become a vegan and questioning what is really making people sick. He begins to think that people’s lifestyle and diet is what is bringing illness. Some of his own family members, his grandparents, died from died from cancer. Many of the viewers can relate to this, others can sympathize. Also, it showed parents cooking cigarettes on frying pans, as if they were eggs, for their children to eat. The viewers are told that, “eating 1 egg per day is just as bad as smoking 5 cigarettes per day for life expectancy” (Anderson), not just chickens can do damage to people’s bodies, but their unhatched

offspring. That appeals emotionally to everyone, especially parents, because no one in their right mind would feed anyone cigarettes, let alone children. In addition, there are stories from real people going through chronic diseases like arthritis, asthma, and diabetes. These people believe must take at least 10 different medications in order to sustain them or to cure them of their illnesses and pains. Apart from humans, animals are also used in the pathos aspect. The documentary displays videos of pigs, chickens, and cows tightly packed and caged. There were clips of chickens in warehouses, some were dead in the mist of the other chicken, and the chicken were still killed and packaged and sent to stores for people to consume. Who would want animals that lived in filth and where dead animals stay? In Duplin County, Carolina, there are hog farms. These hog farms use the water that is contaminated by the feces from the pigs, to water the land. Causing houses and people nearby to smell like the feces. This documentary took advantage of using pathos to change the audience's view of animal-based diets.

Lastly, this documentary uses logos, appeals to logic (Lunsford, Ruszkiewicz 24), to back up everything being said. It is said that, "70% of deaths and morbidity are largely lifestyle related and preventable" (Anderson), meaning people's way of life or even culture can possibly kill them. If average American were to keep the same unhealthy lifestyle, "in the next twenty-five years 1 out of every 3 Americans will have diabetes" (Anderson), because of the decisions of poor diet. There is also misconception of unhealthy diet that claim eating big amounts of sugary foods cause diabetes. Research shown that, "diabetes is not caused by eating a high carbohydrate diet or sugar" (Anderson) but by eating meat-based and processed foods. With that being said, "if a child gets diabetes, 19 years could be taken off their lifespan" (Anderson), parents feel like they should blame it on sugar. In all reality, "carbohydrate consumption is inversely related to diabetes" (Anderson). Not to be mistaken, too much sugar is bad, but least of people's problems.

In the documentary, meat is not the only issue, all animal-based products, like dairy. Using logos was a great way to back up the documentary's purpose.

However, many others would say that the documentary, *What the Health*, is not persuasive due to the extensive use of logos. In the documentary, there are plenty of facts and statistics given out with no source. Viewers would think that the facts given out are either false or made up. Also, there is such thing as too much facts, and too little actual stories. Not everyone is the same, just because a percentage of people go through something, does not guarantee the whole population will go through it. Just like the real people with their stories, they claimed "just fourteen days" (Anderson) and they felt better after changing their diet. That is not a guarantee for the whole population.

What the Health, is a persuasive and inspirational documentary because the use of pathos, logos, and ethos. The pathos, appeal to emotion, captures the viewers attention and make them feel a certain way. Ethos, appeal to credibility, uses instances to show the documentary as trustworthy and reliable. Lastly, logos, appeal to logic or statistics, backs up what is being said in the film, in order not to be opinion based. These strategies help the documentary persuade the viewer into considering or even changing their diet into a plant based one.

WORKS CITED

What the Health. Directed by Kip Anderson and Keegan Kuhn. 2017.

Lunsford, Andrea A., and John J. Ruszkiewicz. *everything's an argument*. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2016.