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Rhetorical Nike Ad

Commercials, advertisements, infomercials are most time ways to persuade people to purchase something. There are many methods that a commercial will interest the audience and get their attention; such as catchy songs, using a sense of humor, making it emotional, design, tone and telling us facts. The Colin Kaepernick Nike ad left a lot of people with different opinions involving his NFL career. This Nike ad employs the appeals of ethos and pathos. This commercial is about an attempt to lay out what Colin Kaepernick did in a positive light to make it okay to repurchase Nike; it has pro-athletes in it, and this shows that this commercial uses pathos, different sports, Colin Kaepernick talking in a serious tone about dreams. The audience of this commercial is the American people it speaks out to the people of color who are directly fighting for Black Lives Matter, and it speaks out to the people with disabilities; also it speaks out to women rights and women being equal with men. This commercial uses a lot of emotion to get people to work harder and keep trying for what they believe. A quote Kaepernick said in the commercial was, "Believe on something, even if it means sacrificing everything."

Nike is a popular brand in the industry today for selling sportswear. Nike has had an edgy reputation since they put Colin Kaepernick in their ad in 2018. As Dennis Green explained in his article, the move has had its fair share of critics, including some who have called for a boycott of Nike, while others have praised the ad. (2) This is because Colin Kaepernick was the first NFL

player to kneel during the national anthem before games in 2016 to protest racial inequality and police brutality. (Green 3) This caused a lot of controversies, giving people different opinions about the Nike brand. In this commercial, Kaepernick had a very serious tone when he was speaking. Making the audience have the sense to take him seriously and show that what he did in his past career he meant and he wants to inspire others from it by saying, "Believe in something, even if it means sacrificing something." This ad was found on Youtube. The audience of this ad as I typed briefly in the first paragraph, is the American people, it speaks out to the people of color who are directly fighting for black lives matter. After the audience of this commercial sees that Nike used Colin Kaepernick in their ad, the people believed that Nike was anti-American. People then began to destroy their Nike products while posting the hashtag #JustBurnIt. Besides the negative responses over the commercial and Kaepernick being bashed, Nike made over \$6 billion in sales and saw online sales grow by 31%. (Sam Carr 3)

In the commercial, Kaepernick said, "Don't try to be the fast runner in your school, or the fastest in the world be the fastest ever." Meaning, don't set your limits; anything is possible if you believe in yourself. This commercial uses pathos; it is an appeal to our emotion, which this ad does. I believe it uses a sense of encouragement because he uses a lot of example in the commercial. Some examples he was using was different clips of athletes playing different sports, and he also had clips of a kid with no legs wrestling. When someone sees that, their first reaction is "aww," showing sympathy for the child. They also had a clip of a man who lost 120 lbs, after beating a brain tumor. Near the end of the commercial, as Kaepernick turned around, he said "believe in something even if it means sacrificing everything," that phrase was towards him for kneeling during the national anthem to protest racial inequality and police brutality (Green 3)

causing him to sacrifice his whole football career. The clips I described used pathos in this commercial. The use of pathos was clear and easy to determine. Pathos is a great way to get people to buy Nike, recommend others to purchase Nike and also encourage people to expand their limits.

Ethos is another appeal in this commercial. The credibility of the person making the argument is ethos. (Steinacker 1) Ethos usually uses celebrities to tell the audience about the product of the commercial. In this commercial, the leading famous professional athlete they use is, Colin Kaepernick. Everybody may not have a liking for Kaepernick because of what he did in 2016, but he gets his point across in the commercial about dreaming crazy and telling people to ask themselves if their dreams are crazy enough. He's not the only celebrity in this commercial, and they have multiple clips of different sports and different celebrities in some of the clips. Such as LeBron James a pro basketball player, Serena Williams, a pro Tennis player, and Alphonso Davies a pro soccer player they all appeal to ethos. Being that Colin Kaepernick is a famous NFL player and he is well known for his positive and negative actions, he can easily persuade us Americans to purchase Nike. Also, by the ad using multiple other professional athletes the audience see it as a good product because there are numerous athletes they are most likely to know who is wearing which may want them to buy it.

In conclusion, this commercial was very controversial and persuaded the audience to both destroy and purchase Nike products. This behavior all in a result of Colin Kaepernick protesting over the National Anthem during football games. Nike also had his face on billboards with his line from the commercial saying "Believe in something, even if it means sacrificing everything." As Nike may have gotten a lot of negative comments about casting Colin Kaepernick in the ad,

they also had their online sales grow. Meaning the use of ethos and pathos worked — pathos using emotion to persuade the audience. For example, the Nike ad using disabled people to show that there are no limits to anything and anyone can do what they believe in. Ethos using professional athletes to tell the audience about the commercial and even to get the audience to watch the commercial. Also, in the commercial, they had multiple other professional athletes.

Works Cited

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