

Mary for direct advocacy in which knowledge

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BUSTER**

Mary Fisher was another living her normal life, taking care of her children and home when she contracted HIV in an infidel marriage. Some people see her as a hero, not a hero who defeated a villain or fought in war, but one who fought the everyday battles in her life. Mary Fisher is a Republican who decided to share her story of HIV infection to spread awareness of HIV/AIDS to people in the United States.

She believed awareness was the key to finding a cure. Her speech was given at the Republican National Convention, in Houston, TX, 1992, and may have been seen as an expostulation of the Republican Government's disregard for the increasing issue and lack of knowledge. The understanding of the audience comes through the rhetoric used in her speech. Without logos, ethos, or pathos the speech would just be informative without any meaning to the audience or herself.

Through each of these literal devices, we are able to identify her logic, passions, and credibility. She calls for an audience—She calls for direct advocacy in which knowledge will be shared. She does not want pity from the audience or to victimize herself, but only for attention to the serious matter of HIV/AIDS. Mary Fisher's logic is very clear—without awareness we cannot move forward in fighting the battle against AIDS.

We should fight with our words and not our silence, Mary is defined by her choice to share her story and spread awareness not by keeping quiet of the matter. If AIDS is viewed as a homosexual disease then there is no hope in finding a cure. Mary's logic in her speech calls us “to recognize that AIDS virus is not a political creature. It does not care whether you are Democrat or

Republican; it does not ask whether you are black or white, male or female, gay or straight, young or old.” This powerful logic helps redefine who the real AIDS’ victims/survivors are; that this virus can happen to anyone. In the beginning of her speech, she uses statistics on how millions of people are infected and how, “ two hundred thousand Americans are dead or dying.

” Logically, one cannot ignore there is a present problem that needs to be addressed. The fact that the presidential administration did not want to address this issue is controversial, but the courage that Mary Fisher possessed to share her story is very admirable. AIDS is not a disease trapped only in the poverty burdened countries or in the realm of gay men. This disease can be anywhere transmitted to anyone. This disease “ is the third leading killer of young adult Americans today,” infecting mostly women and children. Mary changed the entire stereotypical profile in contracting HIV by being a white, married, heterosexual woman with two small children.

Mary’s pathos is evident in her startling statistics for example: forty million people worldwide are dying from AIDS, while two-hundred thousand Americans, “ are dead or dying.” Mary’s first appeal is fear. She explains how AIDS, personifying it as a killer, knows where you live and where you like to hide. By dramatizing our fear to speak out, she appeals to guilt. Her appeals move the audience to feel responsible for not speaking out against the prejudices which prevent the cure.

Our, “ bold initiatives, campaign slogans, and hopeful promises” are not doing anything to promote awareness: Our ignorance is killing innocent

children and mothers; our ignorance is not saving lives. She even states, " It is not you who should feel shame. It is we..

." We are the ones capable of changing public policy. The people as a whole should be standing up and changing the ideal that the people who have contracted AIDS or HIV are at fault.

But, Mary's pathos does not stop with guilt and fear. She goes on to say, " I am one with a black infant suffering with tubes in a Philadelphia hospital ..., I am one with the lonely gay man sheltering a flickering candle from the cold wind of his family's rejection." Mary appeals to sympathy which relates to logic. It is not logical to sit back and not fund for HIV/AIDS prevention when it directly helps us all.

An act of compassion is the cure and is a ripple which will lead many more to spread awareness and eventually affect us all. The millions who watched on TV and those who saw Mary Fisher speak in person knew how she had contracted the HIV virus; she contracted it from her second husband. Never in the speech did she blame her husband. Never in the speech did she accuse her husband of giving her this disease. Mary Fisher that night was the epiphany of ethos.

Mary Fisher is most definitely an activist and her ethos is unmistakable: She is a mother, Republican, and fighter of the HIV/AIDS virus. She establishes her credibility by telling her audience in paragraph one, " I want your attention, not your applause." This is a solid line that was very outstanding to the audience.

She represents the community, “ whose members have been reluctantly drafted from every segment of American society.” She represents the people who she is fighting for: her father, mother, children, and friends. Would the speech have been as powerful if Mary Fisher did not have HIV? If Mary was a healthy woman talking about AIDS the urgency to help would not have been there. It would have been another AIDS topic or informing discussion. Mary was the topic, the embodiment, the reflection of the AIDS/HIV community as a whole.

The saying “ Silence is Golden” does not demonstrate itself in the speech given by Mary Fisher. It establishes the exact opposite; silence on the matter of AIDS/HIV would only keep people from knowing the truth about the virus. Appealing to the audience helped to encourage the people to not diminish people who have this disease and to be supportive of finding a cure. The emotion, logic, and deep sentiment put into her speech were distinguished through the use of pathos, ethos, and logos to reflect the severity and importance to, not only the United States, but on a world-wide scale.