

Ethos essays example

Government, Army



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Invisible Children

Introduction

' Invisible Children: Discover the Unseen' is a fifty-five minute documentary video-a masterpiece at the use of rhetorical appeal and the use of mass advocacy. The video is a an appeal made by the Invisible Children human rights and activism group to the citizens of the United States of America and other parts of the world to donate funds and create awareness in order to apprehend Kony. At this point, one may be led to ask who is Kony? Joseph Kony is the leader of the Lord's Resistance Army-a militarized faction that terrorizes parts of Northern Uganda in a bid to destabilize the country and acquire political power. The Lord's Resistance Army has waged guerilla war against the citizens and government of Uganda for almost two decades. The aim of this paper is to break down the use of ethos, logos and pathos in the video.

The documentary is told through the eyes of Jason Russell, Bobby Bailey, and Laren Poole, three American students who went to Uganda to document the

horrible activities of the LRA. “ The fact that Jason, Bailey and Poole have been to Uganda, the epicenter of the LRA’s activities gives credibility to the video”. (The Lantern). Discover the Unseen was shot after the students came across the activities of the LRA on their way to Sudan. The Students travel to Sudan through Kenya after a travel advisory by President George Bush’ government warning Americans to leave the Horn of Africa. The trio first visit a children’s home in Kenya run by Mama Sapora where over a hundred children left destitute by the ravage of the AIDS scourge. The video also involves Jacob Acaye, a former child soldier who was able to escape the grasp of Kony’s forces. Jacob is presented as a credible source after participating in the military operations of the Lord’s Resistance Army. Jason Russell and the Invisible Children organization have two main audiences-the United States government and general users of social media in developed countries. The video is targeted at the United States government advocating for action from the most powerful army in the world to stop the menace in Uganda. This alludes to the fact that “ it is the responsibility of powerful governments to maintain law and order throughout the globe”. (Russell). ‘ Discover the Unseen’ is aimed at lobbying important government officials to take part in the movement to bring Kony and his forces to a grinding halt. Several recordings of Russell, Bailey, and Poole, in public meetings and other forums indicate his level of dedication and passion to the mission. This creates a sense of trust within the mind of the viewer. Citizens of the United States and other developed nations who consume a lot of social media and internet media are also targeted audiences. Russell seeks to move the mass audience that uses internet and social media in developed nations to gain

advocacy and raise awareness about the treachery in Uganda. The video has effectively established ethos by clearly delineating the targeted audience and the explaining the credibility of some participants.

Logos

The logic in ' Invisible Children: Discover the Unseen' is quite simple: there is a guerilla military leader in Uganda who needs to be stopped. Kony's acts of treachery and tyranny against the people of Uganda go against the fundamental human rights. " The war being waged against the government of Uganda has resulted in the loss of lives, breaking down social structures and decimating the economy in the Northern part of the country."

(stoganews). The most affected casualties of this war are women and children. Hundreds of young boys have been abducted from their homes and forcefully conscripted into the Lord's Resistance Army. Women and girls are ambushed by the soldiers and raped; while older men are killed. The video paints a grim picture of a broken society at the hands of a war lord. Russell, Bailey and Poole, employ various methods to build logos into this documentary. The use of crying children who have undergone numerous atrocities at a young age should knock some sense in the minds of the audience and evoke action. Lack of logic is also underpinned in an explanation of the history of the Lord's Resistance Army. The documentary explains that the group was idealized by prophetess Alice Auma who began her fight against political and socio-economic disparities between the North and South by militarizing the community and preaching that soldier covered in holy oils could not be killed. (McCall). The appeal is targeted to developed nations to take action and prevent the massacre of thousands of innocent

lives in Northern Uganda. It is the role of developed nations to intervene and ensure that fundamental human rights are upheld in all parts of the world. The trio uses the documentary to build a not-for-profit organization called ' Invisible Children' whose sole mission is to create awareness about the suffering of children in various parts of the world and highlight what needs to be done to change the situation. ' Invisible Children' appeals for donations to enable the organization to fund its operations.

Pathos

The emotional appeal made to viewers of the video is clear. The grim picture of hundreds of children sleeping out in the streets of Gulu to avoid abduction by LRA soldiers is heartbreaking. Northern Uganda is filled with destitute children who have been orphaned and left homeless due to the ravaging effects of war. Children as young as five years are abducted and taken into the brush where they are brainwashed, and turned into ruthless, senseless killers. (McCall). The video creates a picture of how things are rosy in the United States whereas human beings, especially women and children suffer in other parts of the world. The background music is part of the props used to ignite emotions. The documentary makes use of sad music that touches the heart in the middle of distressing accounts of Kony's activities. Jacob Acaeye is a major player in eliciting emotions in the video. Jason introduces the young, former child soldier who gives a tearful account of the atrocities committed by Kony and his forces in Northern Uganda. Jacob's account of how he was abducted with his brother and recruited in the Lord's Resistance Army is heart wrenching. His account of how he lost his own brother and the thought of suicide to join him in heaven brings tears to the eyes of many

viewers.(McCall). The documentary proceeds to show pictures of disabled and maimed children who have taken part or been affected by the guerilla warfare in Northern Uganda. Stories of young girls who are abducted and used as sex slaves by the soldiers elicit a lot of emotions and pity from viewers.

Conclusion

The message in ' Invisible Children: Discover the Unseen' is clear; let us come together to raise funds, raise awareness and lobby the government to participate in bringing Joseph Kony and his Lord's Resistance Movement hooligans to justice. Since the release of this video and the mass following that it garnered, the United States government has sent one hundred troops to Uganda in an advisory position. Millions of people are informed about the carnage taking place in Northern Uganda and the role that they could play to put an end to the mayhem. The effective use of ethos, logos and pathos in the documentary helped to achieve wide internet viewership and calls for action from relevant stakeholders.

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