

# oratorical analysis paper essay sample

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Mary Fisher's "A Whisper of AIDS" was created not only to raise awareness on the issue of HIV and AIDS, but to get rid of misjudgments and stereotypes as well. Contracting HIV while being married, straight, and white shows the audience that everyone is at risk. In her speech she tells her audience that "we must act as eloquently as we speak", as Mary Fisher's goal was to open the minds of people that might have a different view on AIDS, and cause them to take action. Addressing the issue and recognizing that everyone is at risk, not just blacks, drug users, and gays, will lead to more being done to prevent it from spreading, as well as more being done to help the people that have already contracted the virus. History

Many things were going on before the 1992 National Republican Convention Address by Mary Fisher. According to Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, by 1986 one million Americans had already been infected with the virus and this number will jump to at least 2 million or 3 million within 5 to 10 years. (Thomas, 2001). This shows the fast rate that this virus is spreading at. In the same year, attorney Geoffrey Bowers is fired from one of the world's largest law firms.

This was after AIDS-related Kaposi's sarcoma lesions appeared on his face. Although the firm argues that it was due to his performance, Geoffrey Bowers was the first to sue and take an AIDS discrimination case to a public hearing. (Navarro, 1994). In the year 1987, The Oprah Winfrey Show broadcasts a town hall meeting where residents express their fears about AIDS and homosexuality. (Oprah Winfrey, 1988) Here we can see one of the stereotypes that Mary Fisher tries to destroy. In 1989 James Oleske became the first U. S. physician to discover AIDS in newborn babies, when many

thought that it was only spread homosexually. (Kinsella, 1989). Meanwhile, more and more people have been dying from AIDS throughout those years, and the best option was to raise awareness. Context

Mary Fisher chose the National Republican Convention as the optimal environment for her speech. The National Republican Convention is a political convention held every four years in the United States by the Republican Party who will be choosing nominees in the upcoming U. S. presidential election. (Chase, 1973). The reason she chose this location was to open the minds of the republicans, most of who did not fit into any of the stereotypes. She reiterated to her audience that everyone was at risk, although they were mostly white, married, wealthy, and did not use drugs. She mentioned that HIV and AIDS do not care if you are white or black, male or female, gay or straight, and she was the perfect example as she was white, straight, and married when she contracted the virus. Another reason to give such a speech in the National Republican Convention is to get the attention of politicians who could take action in order to solve the issue. This can lead them into passing bills necessary in order to stop the spreading of this virus, such as HIV testing which can save lives, expand testing, reduce new infections, and make sure everyone has the opportunity to get tested. This is also very important for pregnant women, since they can transmit the virus to their children if not tested. (Hariman, 2012). Description

Mary Fisher's primary audience included her sons Zackary and Max. Directed to her son Zackary she says she will not give up because " she draws her courage" from him, and that his prayers give her strength. To Max she says

she will not rest until she has done everything that she can in order to make his world safe. This shows that she will do everything in her power in order to protect her children. She does not want her children to be afraid of mentioning the word “ AIDS” when she is gone, as she knows that the best tactic is awareness.

Mary Fisher’s secondary audience is the public. The only way to prevent the spread of HIV is by raising awareness which can only be done with the help of her audience. She involves everyone by saying that if they think they are safe, they are at risk. She uses scare tactics in order to gain the attention of everyone, as if HIV could be contracted by anyone listening. The fact the HIV can be transmitted not only during sexual intercourse, but also during blood transfusions and pregnancy, gives her credibility and catches the audience attention. (How Is HIV Transmitted?, 2011) Structure

Mary Fisher’s “ Whisper of AIDS” is an informative speech, which delivers the information and message clearly to the audience. It is absolutely unbiased and contains only facts. (Sherwyn P. Morreale, 2007). Her goal is to bring out the reality and to shine the light on the horrible truth of how HIV and AIDS are affecting the society. The language she uses shows her good will and her good moral character, creating sympathy towards her. Her speech is strong, bold, influential, and informative. She begins with an introduction about the issue, continues with facts, and ends with a call for action. Influence

“ Whisper of AIDS” influences individuals infected with HIV as well as people unaware or uninformed. Mary Fisher’s speech tells the audience to support those infected instead of rejecting them, by saying that we are all human

and we don't benefit from being isolated. She gives strength and courage to the ones suffering, while at the same time informing the public at a time when the AIDS epidemic was becoming more prominent in the view of the people. Her purpose to inform was met, since at that time the majority of the people had their own stereotypes of HIV and many believed they were safe. (Morales, 1990) Being a white, married woman, it was made very clear that everybody was at risk and that the word should be spread. Evaluation

The immediate results show how truly influential Mary Fisher was with her speech in 1992. Not only did it put an end to the stigma and create self-awareness, but shortly after, more and more time has been put into research. In 1993, Dr. Merle Sande brings together the State of California, the City and County of San Francisco, UCSF, SFGH, and the Gladstone Foundation to create and fund the Gladstone Institute of Virology and Immunology (GIVI), a research institute dedicated to the study of virology and immunology with a focus on HIV and AIDS. (Cisneros, 2011). On the same year, The Women's Interagency HIV Study and HIV Epidemiology Study began, which are both major US federally funded research studies on HIV/AIDS. (Cisneros, 2011). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention initiates HIV prevention community planning process for local distribution of federal prevention funding in 1993 as well. Analyze

One of the tactics she uses are similes, comparing what many people would consider two different things. (What is a Simile?, 2003). Although white, married, and heterosexual, she compares herself to the black infant struggling with tubes and the lonely gay man. This tactic shows the audience

that anyone can be a victim and presents to them the idea of accepting these people as they accept her.

Another very important tactic that she uses is the scare tactic. HIV and AIDS only ask if you are human, therefore everyone is at risk. Since we are all human, someone that would have never thought to be in danger suddenly feels like this applies to them. Mary Fisher says at one point that “ if you do not see the killer stalking your children; look again.” By saying this, now even the people who think that they are not at risk of being infected now start worrying about their children and about a safer world for their kids in the future. Since HIV can be transmitted not only during sexual intercourse, but also during blood transfusions and pregnancy, Mary Fisher gains credibility and the audience gets dragged in. (How Is HIV Transmitted?, 2011) Results

Many things are still being done about the issue of HIV and AIDS years after Mary Fisher’s speech. From policies and campaigns, to research and prescribed drugs. In 1998, the US Supreme Court rules in *Bragdon v. Abbott* that the Americans with Disabilities Act cover people in earlier stages of HIV disease, not just AIDS. (Tate, 2004) In 1999 president Clinton announces the “ Leadership and Investment in Fighting an Epidemic” initiative to address the epidemic, which leads to increased funding. (Institute of Medicine and National Research Council, 2010) In the year 2000, UNAIDS, WHO and other global health groups announce joint initiative with five major pharmaceutical manufacturers to negotiate reduced prices for AIDS drugs in developing countries. (Knight, 2010) In 2001 generic drug manufacturers offer to

produce discounted, generic forms of HIV/AIDS drugs, and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria begins operations. (Faulk & Usunier, 2009) In 2006, scientists in the lab of Warner Greene identify a function of A3G, a protein that acts against HIV, a finding that explains why CD4 T cells are sometimes so susceptible to HIV infection and at other times are highly resistant. (Kane, 2008) Conclusion

Mary Fisher accomplished her goal of informing the public the truth about HIV and AIDS, and destroying the negative stigma attached to the virus. She knows that if everyone is aware and well informed, we can do a better job preventing the spreading of HIV. The results of her call for action can be seen even years later, since more is being done to prevent it, and to help the people infected as well. Mary Fisher repeated many times that anyone could contract it, and that everyone is at risk, raising awareness which would lead to more been done about the issue.

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