

# Plastic water bottles causing flood of harm to our environment rhetorical analysis...

[Environment](#), [Pollution](#)



Environmental protection has become a major issue on a global level lately. Numerous conferences and negotiations aim to eliminate worldwide consequences of environmental pollution and preserve the biosphere. Leading scientific experts are developing technologies using alternative energy sources and renewable resources. Researchers investigate the possibilities to reduce the industrial and consumer-related environmental harm and improve energy efficiency. Ecosystems protection is also one of the priorities to legislative authorities on both international and national levels.

However, governmental initiatives cannot be fully efficient without support of a private sector. Various eco-initiatives are regularly held by civic organizations to raise environmental awareness of the population. In some countries the basic course of ecology is integrated into college and school curriculums. Individual incentives add their contribution to the preservation of bio-integrity of our planet as well. Every indifferent person can make a change by simply informing friends and acquaintances about environmental issues. Journalists can make it on a wider scale. In particular, the article "Plastic Water Bottles Causing Flood of Harm to Our Environment" exposes danger of plastic contaminant to our natural surroundings.

The article was published by Norm Schriever in Huffington Post, which is an American live streaming network, providing news and blogs for the general audience. It offers original content covering politics, entertainment, style, world news, technology and other topics. The readers circle is multicultural and from different backgrounds. Hence, the language of the essay is simple and expressive, lavishly furnished with vivid examples and statistic data.

Selection of rhetorical devices is also carefully chosen to inform the readers unfamiliar with the notion and ignorant of environmental danger about harm of plastic bottles and induce the audience to seriously consider limiting or ceasing the usage of such packaging.

In general, diction of the text tends to be informal. Therefore, one can conclude that the word choice is aimed to appeal to all ages and social categories. The author uses contractions: “ that’s”, “ couldn’t”, “ isn’t” etc. to add colloquial touch to the discussion. This blog entry also features informal descriptions or slang names of the objects rather than their official equivalents. For instance: “ Walkie Talkie things” stand for cell phones; “ fad” for whim, caprice; “ those driving Porsche 911s” is related to upper-middle class citizens; “ human fish tank” is used for biosphere.

One may assume that major part of the readership has already got acquainted with some basic knowledge of plastic wares environmental perils. However, bare awareness does not reduce the numbers of bottled water usage. Persuasive efforts of the writer are aimed to convince ordinary consumers to display more concern about ecology, which is best achieved in an informal discourse. The language devices used by Norm Schriever create the atmosphere of intimate conversation resembling one between friends. In this way, the author brings the discussion from international and governmental levels to the issues concerning local neighborhood.

The style of expression is rather emotionally colored, which suggests author’s perturbation about the subject. For example, the sentence “ Who the heck would actually PAY to drink water when they could get it for free at home?” is a rather rhetoric question that requires readers to consider using

tap water as an alternative to bottled one. It also includes word “ the heck” in its negative connotation, implying writer’s condemnation of the practice. The word “ PAY” is capitalized to emphasize the author’s outrage by the water bottles for sale, which is further stressed by the term “ a rip off”. The writer intends to gain readers’ trust and attract their attention from the very first words of the article. He uses anecdote to begin with: “ I remember the first time I saw a bottle of water for sale”. Exclamatory sentence “ That's just crazy!” conveys author’s indignation of the thoughtless consumerism. Peculiar syntax of the article suggests the context of an open discussion. After a brief introduction, the blog entry turns into the series of questions and answers, creating a possible dialogue between the interested audience and the writer. It also contributes to the strict text organization and highlights the most prominent points of author’s research. Every new statement is introduced in a separate paragraph, so that a reader might make a pause to reflect on an idea. Syntactic peculiarities of the blog entry are also favorable for establishment of the author’s authority. Some questions naming the paragraphs employ assertion: “ Isn't bottled water safer and cleaner?”; “ But don't we recycle?” illustrating popular beliefs which the author refutes. His statements, however, are not unsubstantiated. They are vastly supported by statistic details, providing cross-references to original respective sources. The writer appeals to authority as well by using the data initially published by reputed organizations such as: “ the Ocean Conservatory, the Earth Policy Institute, the National Resources Defense Council”.

In order not to overstrain the readership with lavish numbers, and

simultaneously facilitate their understanding of the problem scale, the writer uses analogies which are better commonly understood. For instance, the overpricing of bottled water against its actual cost is better understood by the readers when compared with the price for a cup of coffee or a gallon of gas. The number of people whose death was caused by pollution is compared to the number of victims of such severe epidemics as Malaria and HIV.

Accusing tone of the article is supported by a vivid imagery bearing negative connotation such as: “pollute”, “contaminate” and “sicken” describing environmental impact of plastic, “screwy people” who “yapped” into their cell phones obviously judging people buying bottled water, “insane amount of resources” commenting on statistics of bottles manufacturing. The author also contemplates on the amount of profits annually gained by beverage companies, warning against “flushing your money down the toilet” especially since a high percentage of beverages sold is re-packaged tap water.

All the mentioned rhetoric devices and stylistic techniques serve to underpin the author’s argument, pertaining to the persuasive character of the narration. Norm Schriever warns the readers against excessive consumerism, leading to alarming pollution level left for future generations to cope with. The writer concludes his paper with a hopeful statement that cultural and social changes will be able to improve the current situation and offer an efficient solution.

## **Works cited**

Schriever, Norm. " Plastic Water Bottles Causing Flood of Harm to Our Environment". Huffingtonpost. The Huffington post, 29 July 2013. Web. 23 Oct. 2014.