

How to fake a puffin society

[Science](#), [Social Science](#)



How to Fake a Puffin Society

The article “ How to Fake a Puffin Society” by Michelle Nijhuis attempts to inform a general audience, in an engaging, informative and pleasant way about how efforts to restore sea bird colonies go, through a good combination of emotional appeals and scientific information.

The purpose of this article seems to be about very little other than simply informing the audience about how one goes about making a colony for sea birds. The author seems to think this is a very interesting process, and seems to think that the audience will think so too. There does not seem to be any underlying arguments about politics of the environment or anything like that – the author spends almost the entire time describing the process that had to be undertaken to return Puffins to a colony, including using fake birds and “ recorded bird calls” to get terns, a bird that would replace another bird that threatened the puffin population (Nijhuis 3). The time devoted to describing this and other scientific processes that the professor had to do over the years shows that the author really is just trying to tell an interesting, informative story.

The author does not seem to have a very small or specific audience in mind. The author does not seem to think that the reader will be any kind of experts in the field, because she takes great efforts to make sure that the reader, even if they do not already know anything about Puffins, will understand. Also, the author explains things that someone with any kind of academic or practical knowledge of puffins would already know, things like the way they relate to each other, how they mate and so on. The language is not very advanced, without any specific technical words. This seems to show that the

author wants to write for a very general audience, they want anyone who happens to pick up this article to be able to read it and have a good time. Other than that there is very little to show that the author intends a specific audience: they do not seem concerned about age, gender, education, or any of the other things that people usually use to target an audience. The author writes for a very broad group.

The author's persona is very closely tied to their audience. This author wants to write in a way that makes readers interested and want to connect with what she is saying. In this, the author's persona comes across as being very relaxed, but engaged. She seems to find all of the information that she is passing on to the reader valuable and genuinely interesting, diving into the smallest details. The persona also comes across with a great deal of curiosity and a little bit of authority. It seems like the persona knew nothing about this topic before looking into it, but has now discovered a great deal of information and wants to share that information with the reader. This means that the persona comes across as having real authority to speak on the topic, but also puts the reader very far from being too knowledgeable – the persona does not at all speak down to the reader, but rather shares the exploration with him or her.

There are several methods used in this piece. The first appeals to authority. Most of this paper is structured as the things that the author had learned from the main scientist she investigated, and so many of her reports stem from his authority. The article also uses a cause-effect structure because it tries to demonstrate how certain actions in helping a puffin colony develop actually allowed the colony to develop. The article has almost no statistics,

but is very descriptive of the processes undertaken.

The appeals used in this article vary. On the one hand there seem to be a lot of emotional appeals. The article begins by talking about how “ First things first: Puffins are adorable” (Nijhuis 1). This is clearly an emotional appeal. It makes the reader want to connect to the animal in question because of their appearance, their cuteness etc. She pulls this even farther by referencing the puffin’s “ clownish faces, their waddling walk, and their chubby-dumpling bodies” (Nijhuis 1). Once the reader finishes reading this first paragraph , they are forced to accept the conclusion that “ Puffins are irresistible”

(Nijhuis 1). But the author also makes appeals to logic and reason as well.

While the original way that she gets interest is through emotions, most of the text actually discusses the issues in a very rational way, describing the science involved with restoring puffin populations and how scientists spent many decades learning about the process of doing so by trial and error. So the text represents a combination of logic and appeals to emotion.

Overall, this is an interesting text. It is for a general audience, written in a very accessible way, and seems to mostly be interested in informing readers about the information it covers, using both appeals to logic and emotion.

Works Cited

Nijhuis, Michelle. “ How to Fake a Puffin Society” Slate.