

Moor's message in bowling for columbine

[Sociology](#), [Violence](#)



Introduction

The United States is a developed nation with no civil war. It is however known for massive killings of people by firearms. Michael Moore, a filmmaker, explores the reason behind the killing of 12 students and one teacher in April 1999 in Columbine High School. He associates the killing with the easy availability of firearms in the nation, although he goes ahead to explore more roots for the bloodshed. The killing at Columbine was executed by two students, Dylan Klebold, and Eric Harris. Michael documents how the United States is a country involved with most killings resulting from guns in the world. To document film, the documentary features interviews with famous people and the former classmates of the killed students. Among them includes Charlton Heston, National Rifle Association's former president, and portrays how obtaining a firearm and gun was easy. He gives an example of a bank issuing a gun freely because of opening an account with it and deposited a certain amount of money. Moore gets some answers regarding the violence involving gun ownership, although they were very inadequate in explaining the trend.

The film uses a great sense of humor and clips to win the audiences' attention and show how the killings were an issue to get concerned about. Bowling Columbine provides the view of the violence involving guns, investigates the USA gun control and lack of policies to regulate their ownership. Michael uses rhetorical strategies, film techniques, and ethos in his documentary, which assists in the thesis of the film.

The Bowling Theme

The film's plot focuses on the uncontrolled ownership of guns in the USA that has led to increased killings using firearms. The title of the film originates from an incident in Columbine school where two students killed 12 school mates and their teacher. The students had earlier attended a bowling class in the morning prior to the incident that happened the same day. Moore uses the bowling theme to feature his documentary, where he uses a film of militiamen in Michigan using bowling pins to hit their targets for practices. He interviews two former classmates and wonders if the bowling game had any value or just installed fear among students. The installed fear was one of the explanations he got for the violence involving guns in the nation.

Mocks

Michael ridicules and mocks various people in his interviews and the events in the film. For instance, he features himself entering into a bank in Michigan, opens a deposit account and deposits money after which he walks out of the bank carrying a new hunting rifle. He jokingly asks a rhetorical question on the issue of the bank handing out guns. He asks if they thought it was less dangerous giving out guns in a bank. This was ridicule to the bank, and he uses it to prove his point on the lack of control and policies regarding firearms. Also, in the opening of the film, he mocks the American president by saying that he had bombed another country whose name he could not even pronounce. Michael makes this statement to portray how the nation was ignorant towards violence and use of guns. In another instance, Moore shows a clip of a young boy removing guns from his pockets. This was entirely satirical and used the clip to prove his point of how guns could be

easily accessed even by children. Through the clip, he makes quite a serious point, while at the same time making it seem funny, although the fact was worrying.

Logos

A rhetorical strategy is employed in the film through the use of interviews of various well-known personalities to explore further into the uncontrolled use of guns and violence. Michael uses Logos strategically in the documentary in an appealing way to the viewer's values and common sense. Moore travels around interviewing people, and inquiring about the reason for gun ownership and why America is the most dangerous among countries in the world regarding gun violence. He lets people know what others think, and not only giving out their ideas. This strategy assisted in delivering the message in a tactic and more human way to the audience.

An interview with Director of communications, McCollum, near Columbine near Lockheed plant, Michael, tries to get his view of the mass killing at Columbine. Michael's selection of music in this instance was very appropriate in the portrayal of certain light. The most touching is the use of the montage with the words " what a wonderful world." A top of the music are flashes showing America's involvement in the war. Using Armstrong's song about a wonderful world was a way ridiculing the government, and shows how the opposite is exact. The song is used in his interview with McCollum just after his statement that the missiles Moore was talking about are used to protect America from transgressors. The flashes are of people being shot and dying while foreigners are given American guns freely to cause this. His idea was

giving the audience a chance to have their personal views about American guns ironically.

Another interview was between him and Marilyn Manson, which is conducted after a concert in his dressing room. Manson gives Michael his views concerning America's climate of fear, stating that the consumption of fear in it cause the violence in the state's society. The interview with him was caused by numerous social pundits linking Manson with the violence in computer games, cinemas, and televisions. In his explanation, Manson uses the example of Colgate, stating that nobody wants to talk to you if you have bad breath. He says that was the reason people point at him as the one responsible for killings and bombing at Kosovo rather than the president who had ordered them. Manson asks him on what he could tell Columbine students if given a chance, to which he responds to listening to what they would say rather than him telling them anything. He adds that that is what nobody did. Michael, however, contrasts the view of the fear climate resulting in gun violence. He does this by showcasing the attitudes prevailing in Canada. He states that Canada had the same gun ownership as America, but the violence levels were negligible. To illustrate this thesis, he visits Canada neighborhoods at the U. S.-Canada border where he discovers doors being left unlocked, showing the less concern given to security and crimes.

The climax of the documentary is marked by Moore's visit and interview with National Rifle Association current Chairman and actor Charlton Heston. He inquires him about firearm violence. Heston gives a lengthy response, including a suggestion of America having a history of violence as compared

to other countries. He attributes this to the skyrocketing crime. He claims that every citizen had the right to possess a gun and denies responsibility for violence while walking out of the interview. This reality illusion is used by Moore to reflect the unconcerned NRA and leaves the crowd to reflect.

Michael also features a Beatles Song in footage where residents of a Utah are buying guns. A law was passed in the town where all residents are required to own guns. The song also provides footage of rifles being fired and shooting ranges at carnivals, operation of an assault rifle by Denise Ames, footage of Jeff Doucet being killed by Gary Plauche, a man who is killed in a riot after removing his shirt and the murder in 1993 where Emilio kills his ex-wife.

Ethos

Moore's documentary also makes use of ethos to support his thesis. He uses scenes that leave the audience, believing in his message as presented. In the beginning, he goes to the bank to open an account and be given a free gun. This scene lacks a factual aspect since he is not able to walk out with the gun immediately. The scene does not show how easy it is to get a gun, as he explains. The use of ethos in various instances assists him in delivering his message effectively to the public. He achieves this through the numerous interviews, which leaves the audience to decide on whom to believe in whom not to. Most of the personalities are well known and in one way connected to the guns and violence, an example being the former president of NRA.

Conclusion

The Bowling Columbine, filmed by Michael Moore, targets Americans and the general public who may not have the idea on the gun violence in the state.

The film uses bursts of music, sounds, clips, footages, and visual combinations to put his message across, and mostly get the attention of the audience. The interview proceedings and his mockery and ridicules in various instances position the audience to accept his views, especially over the violence and associate them to NRA and Charlton Heston. At the end of the interviews, Michael rolls the camera and lets the audience see the reactions and expressions of the personalities. His ridicules and mockery statements and questions were a way of passing out his views about gun violence in America, where he seems to disagree with most opinions from the interviews.