

# Gabriella cowperthwaite's use of pathos, ethos, and logos in blackfish

[Entertainment](#), [Movie](#)



Does it ever come to mind how animals in captivity live? Are people aware of what is going on around the world at facilities that have animals captive?

The film I am analyzing, *Blackfish* by Gabriella Cowperthwaite, answers those questions and much more. With about 22.4 million people that visit SeaWorld every year, it is clear people are unaware of this disturbing and inhumane information. This film really opens viewer's eyes and shows what SeaWorld hides from us. This paper is going to show how Gabriella Cowperthwaite uses pathos, logos, and ethos to prove her argument against SeaWorld.

The film *Blackfish* is a documentary showing what all SeaWorld does to their animals and how they are treated. The film consists of about 20 different former orca whale trainers, and each person talks about their experiences with the whales, and as well as SeaWorld themselves. This film does not just show how the Orcas are mistreated, but how the trainers and employees were not treated the best either. They also touch a lot on how they get these orcas, and what qualifies them to be taken. Overall this film is showing the viewers what about SeaWorld is harmful to the whales, and also convincing the reader we need to do something to stop this behavior by SeaWorld.

Gabriella Cowperthwaite used pathos for her strongest arguments. The emotion was what hooked the audience into this documentary. She used so many strong examples of emotional experiences at SeaWorld that it really made the viewer feel what the trainers were feeling. One thing Cowperthwaite used was when Catina got her baby taken from her, and Carol Ray, a former trainer said, "generally Catina is not a vocal whale, but

after Calina was removed her mom stayed at the corner of the pool shaking, screeching, and crying." (Blackfish). This to me was the most memorable thing from the film, and also got the most emotion out of me. It makes the viewer think about if they got their baby ripped away from them, and the audience can really feel that pain when they put themselves in a similar situation.

Another strategy used very well was logos. Logos was used a lot after pathos, backing up the emotional appeal. I thought the most attention-grabbing statistic was when John Jett, former SeaWorld Trainer said " at least forty-five orca whales have died under the care of Seaworld.." (Blackfish). To me when I hear that so many questions go through my head such as; how old were they? How did they die? Was it natural? How many have died out in the wild? Forty-Five is such an enormous number of whale deaths, especially knowing it was because of SeaWorld. This fact changed my perspective of SeaWorld the most because it is one thing if they are just not in the right environment, but it is another when the whales in SeaWorld's care are actually dying.

The last strategy Cowperthwaite effectively used was ethos. Something often questioned was how they get these whales, and what goes into that process. Cowperthwaite knew the audience would have these questions so she included at the beginning of the documentary some interviews from the gentlemen that caught the whales for SeaWorld. One of the most impactful men she interviewed was John Crowe. John Crowe began with how they caught them, he explained they focused on moms, and babies. He also

explained the whale's strategy used to try to escape and separate to trick the fisherman into chasing the male Whales, and not the females. After explaining this he said " I lost it. I started crying, I just knew I couldn't keep doing this anymore (Blackfish)." This shows that even the crewmembers being paid to do this, they knew this was not okay to do. A lot of them only worked for two or three years because they could not deal with what they were doing to these orcas. As an audience its really important to see that not even the employees support this, so why should the public?

Gaberiella Cowperthwaite did an excellent job putting this documentary together in a way that incorporated all three appeals. It gives the viewer, a set and stone reason to not put their money into SeaWorld, rather than just knowing SeaWorld is bad, but not knowing how they are bad, and what goes into the training of Orca whales. Overall, I hope this paper really shows what made this film so effective, it was no specific appeal that made it that way, it was the use of putting them all together to make one argument strong.