

The use of pathos to form an emotional appeal for the audiences in the "choose on..."

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



Picture yourself as a parent checking your phone during work only to discover there is an active shooter in your child's school. Your stomach drops. You can't do anything but scream. You rush out the door in an effort to reach the school before it's too late. The emotions you are experiencing are exactly what the ad campaign created by Moms Demand Action attempts to evoke.

The use of rhetoric in the images to bring forth these emotions is a classic use of pathos to promote a product or in this case a movement. The creators of the ad campaign utilize pathos in a way that tugs at the reader's heart strings while addressing an issue that today more than ever plagues society. Each ad presents the reader with two children; one holds a seemingly harmless object, the other holds a military grade rifle. The first presents a child holding the fairy tale " Little Red Riding Hood," the next a kinder egg, and the third a rubber dodgeball. What do these items all have in common? All of three of these items at one point or another had a movement to be banned from schools in our country. Compare each of these items to the military grade rifle shown to the right, and ask yourself which is more dangerous. The clear answer is the rifle, right?

The purpose of this advertising campaign is to bring attention back to the fact that there is not sufficient regulation on the ability to obtain a gun which Moms Demand Action believe to be the catalyst behind school shootings in America. As soon as I saw this ad campaign for the first time, I was struck by how direct the message was. The organization had zero intentions of hiding what their goal was in subliminal messages — despite the success subliminal

messages have had in advertising for numerous companies. The ad was raw, provocative, almost scary in nature. The direct approach utilizes pathos in a way that does not simply create sadness, but creates fear. The use of emotion is then coupled with the juxtaposition of a harmless candy or dodgeball with the assault rifle, and it makes me think. I sat there staring at the images thinking of the state of our country. Shootings seem like they are more inevitable than a random act of tragedy. It's almost like every few weeks someone else is shot. I scroll the news at the end of the day, see a headline reading " 4 dead in latest shooting," but where is the news in that? The number of mass shootings in our country has been rising ever since the start of the new century. According to statistics released in 2013 by the F. B. I., " There were, on average, 16. 4 such shootings a year from 2007 to 2013, compared with an average of 6. 4 shootings annually from 2000 to 2006". Our country was and is in a state of disaster, yet we seem to be running in circle on our way to solving the issue.

The " Choose One" ad campaign was released during 2013 following the tragic shooting at Sandy Hook elementary, but has anything changed since? Earlier this year we experienced the mass school shooting in Parkland, Florida, and that incident did not happen in a vacuum. Since the Sandy Hook school shooting, " There have been at least 239 school shootings nationwide. In those episodes, 438 people were shot, 138 of whom were killed". Two-hundred and thirty-nine different school shootings in the span of 5 and a half years. After all of that, we made a change, right?

We created new legislation to work to take guns off the streets, get rid of gun shows, and in general make accessing firearms more regulated and difficult. Wait, we didn't. We are still fighting this issue here in September of 2018 nowhere near a resolution. A few months back I was visiting my sister in Atlanta, Georgia, and she told me about Brian Kemp. Kemp was a republican gubernatorial candidate in Georgia who made headlines with a controversial campaign advertisement he was running. Kemp's ad showed him talking to a teenager who was trying to date his daughter. During the entirety of the ad, Kemp was cleaning a shotgun he held aimed at the teen. Our country is living through some of the most intense gun violence in the country, yet we are still seeing people trying to reach power in our country by promoting it. Kemp uses the divisive nature of the gun control issue and the fear associated with mass shootings to bring his face into the forefront of the conversation. Kemp's ad is almost a parallel to the rhetoric that is used in the Moms Demand Action campaign Choose One. The image of the gun is used to create a fear which is fed off to promote his own agenda. Kemp is pushing for less gun regulations while his counterpart Moms Demand Action uses the fear created as a platform to promote for a change to the regulations.

The use of pathos to form an emotional appeal for the audiences of the respective ads builds from the same image of a gun to push for opposite agendas. The emotional draw the "Choose One" campaign emphasized did far more than simply get the name Moms Demand Action into the public view. The campaign questioned the direction our society is moving in in a

way that brought out an emotional response through the imagery of the kids. The state of our country is in upheaval with more shootings occurring in the last few years than ever before, yet we still see headstrong advocates of gun rights acting like nothing needs change.

The “ Choose One” campaign took a very simple rhetorical approach to tackle a very complex issue in a way that resonates with the heart of America.