

National geographic: the world's most dangerous drug



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The World's Most Dangerous Drug is a documentary produced by the National Geographic Channel in 2006, that explores the disturbing effects of methamphetamines, not only to those who use the drug but also to those people associated with them. American journalist and news presenter, Lisa Ling, takes the viewer on a journey to the mental and physical aftermath of taking Meth. The use of selection and omission, re-enactment and archival material, manipulation of codes and actuality, all contribute to the portrayal of the issues presented in this documentary.

These issues conspire: the high percentage of crimes in the United States created by meth users, the promising lives destroyed by Meth and the life-long damage Meth has done to those who have stopped taking it, yet are still under the influence of the drug. Selection and Omission plays an important part in portraying the ideas of the documentary because it is an effective technique used to control what the audiences are able to view and what they are not. Interviews are widely used, not only of the Meth users but also of those who deal with the issue of meth on a daily basis.

Examples of interviews that stood out were the ones of Kobe Kempey and his family. The portrayal of the idea that anyone can be victimised by Meth is initialised through these interviews. Kempey's life story also depicts the lives of those who have survived being meth addicts in the past, however are still haunted by it. Professional interviews from doctors and from the police are used to show the lifelong consequences Meth does to people and to communities.

The audiences are purposely affected by the interviews so that they can sympathise with the Meth victims and so that they are aware of the repercussions of taking the drug. The archival material shown in the beginning of the documentary creates a feeling of anxiety within the audience and introduces the main objective of the film. Through the footage and sound, the audiences are aware of the growing popularity of Meth among young adults. The re-enactment of Michael Wamsley and Janel Hornickel's experience, half-way through the documentary, progresses this idea and proves the promising lives destroyed by Meth. Similarly, the documentary *Sicko*, by Michael Moore, uses archival footage and sound to show real events and to make the documentary more persuasive. The manipulation of codes can affect one's reading of a text. Symbolic codes are shown throughout the film to signify various meanings. The American flag is shown outside the Meth house to convey the idea of Methamphetamines ravaging communities in America.

The British pound being used as a 'spliff' also informs the audience that meth, not only ravages American communities, but also damages other countries through its diversity. Actuality is a code of realism that involves the recording of images and sounds on location as they actually happen. An example was when Lisa Ling went to a Bangkok red-light district to film the two, Thai, young women taking Meth for more booze. The women did not want to be shown on camera due to the constraints in the country. This scene depicts a real event that occurred in an unrehearsed situation.

It represents the cultural context of Thailand and a part of their way of social life. Another example is of the 'drug deal' scene with the undercover cop, <https://assignbuster.com/national-geographic-the-worlds-most-dangerous-drug/>

Sean Christian. This documentary is presented in third person Point of view to look at the issue of Meth from a different perspective. The Thai government's values of discipline and safety throughout the country were conveyed through 3rd person P. O. V. The audiences are aware of those values because of the event that was shown in the documentary.

A few footages from " Bangkok's Brutal Crackdown on Meth in 2003" were shown to purposely appeal to the audience and make them more aware of the generation of Thai Meth addicts. Visual effects and confronting images both assist in making this text more persuasive. Diagrams of the brain were shown to give the audience an insight to what really occurs inside the body when Meth is consumed. Before and after images of meth addicts were shown to reveal the physical effects and ' meth mouths' to portray the damage Meth causes to the teeth.

Confronting advertisements from the Montana Meth Project were also shown to target young audiences and to promote their campaign. Repetition is also used, when showing the Meth bags and the ' Methamphetamines' medical sign to highlight the importance of knowing what meth looks like to avoid wasted lives of addiction. Technological developments such as, animation allowed this portrayal to be more powerful. This documentary was produced mainly in the American states of Portland and Omaha and also in Bangkok, Thailand in 2006.

Technological developments have made travelling to these destinations more accessible. This is a large-scale type of production because it was produced by the national Geographic Channel. The World's Most Dangerous

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Drug depicts the mental and physical effects of taking Meth through the use of selection and omission, re-enactment and archival material, manipulation of codes, actuality and visual effects to raise awareness concerning the issue of methamphetamines, continuing to seduce millions around the world, infecting brains and bringing crime, chaos and death wherever it goes.