**SPEEC-1100**

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**Listen review about Mary Fisher's A whisper of AIDS**

In 1992 many people still believed HIV/AIDS was a homosexual disease; a disease in which infected prostitutes and intravenous drug abusers. In order to change those stereotypes and misconceptions, on August 19, 1992, a HIV positive married mother named Mary Fisher addressed the Republican National Convention on the issue of AIDS awareness. This was a wonderful persuasive speech. In the speech, Fisher talked about the increasing serious AIDS situation in the world and people’s ignorant attitude to it. Without any nonverbal gestures, only using herself as an example and her faithful eyes to display her point, Fisher spoke out how awareness is the key to finding a cure. This was the first time that a woman called for Americans to build a future for our children based on HIV/AIDS education, prevention, and awareness. Although it was not eloquent，mighty or tough liking “I have a dream” and “Yes, we can,” but this address still touched everyone’s heart, changed public policy and everyone remembered this weak woman’s words which can prove her standpoint, “*AIDS virus is not a political creature. It does not care whether you are Democrat or Republican; it does not ask whether you are black or white, male or female, gay or straight, young or old*.”

Firstly, Mary Fisher’s logic was very clear. The main objective of Fisher's speech was to stop the silence surrounding the discussion of AIDS. In the beginning of her speech, she used statistics on how millions of people are infected and how, “*two hundred thousand Americans are dead or dying.*” She emphasized the problem that AIDS was causing, and the possible future problems that might bloom from it, and how things could look up if more people were aware of it. A powerful tool that Mary Fisher used to get her message across was her own personal HIV diagnosis. Fisher boldly stressed how she contracted AIDS from her husband, and this example broke through all previous misjudgments and illuminates how powerful the disease actually was. Throughout the speech she told everyone that they were completely at risk, by using scare tactics and stating that no one was safe.

Secondly, Fisher used pathos. Fisher emphasized "normal" people like her could obtain the virus just as easily. Her story moved the audience to feel responsible for speaking out against the prejudices which prevent the cure. Our ignorance was killing innocent children and mothers; our ignorance was not saving lives. She even stated, “*It is not you [those who have HIV/AIDS] who should feel shame. It is we [..].*” We were the ones capable of changing public policy. But, Mary’s pathos did not stop with guilt and fear. She went on to say, “*I am one with a black infant suffering with tubes in a Philadelphia hospital [...], I am one with the lonely gay man sheltering a flickering candle from the cold wind of his family’s rejection*.” Mary appealed to sympathy.

Thirdly, fisher’s ethos was unmistakable: She was a mother, and fighter of the HIV/AIDS virus. She established her credibility by telling her audience in paragraph one, “*I want your attention, not your applause*.” She represented the community, “*whose members have been reluctantly drafted from every segment of American society.*” She represented the people who she was fighting for. She showed good will, good sense, and a good moral character which completely allowed the conservative audience to side with her. The speech had been as powerful because Mary Fisher did have HIV. No one would forget her chest’s yellow ribbon which presented AIDS.

Finally, the ideas that Fisher presents were arranged in their specific order. At first she explained that she was HIV positive, so that she could use this to her advantage. If she hadn't come out and said this, then at first she would have seemed to be someone who could not really relate to the struggle she was fighting for. By telling this fact, the audience would understand that she was the perfect spokeswoman for the struggle at hand. Also in the beginning, she delivered her direct goal. At first she said "*Less than three months ago, at the platform hearings in Salt Lake City, I asked the Republican Party to lift the shroud of silence which has been draped over the issue of HIV/AIDS.*" This statement explained that she had a history with the Republican Party, and used the technique of memory in order to come across as someone who was really fighting for what she believed in. Then Fisher said "*I have come tonight to bring our silence to an end.*" This was in the first paragraph of her speech in order to quickly bring to light what she was addressing and to proclaim what she was fighting for. This showed that she was assertive with her mission and was very passionate about what she believed in.

At the end of her speech Fisher made a pledge to her children. To her son Zachary, she claimed that she would not give in because she drew her courage from him. This statement meant that she would not stop what she was doing until something was done about it. To Zachary she said that his prayers gave her strength, and he was the reason she wanted to tell America "*You are at risk*." Then she addressed her son max. She claimed that she would not rest until she had done all which she could do in order to make the world safe. She wanted her children to not be afraid to speak of AIDS out loud, because she wanted everyone to be aware. This device was used in order to gain sympathy from the audience. By her making a pledge to her children (that almost sound as if these were the last words she might say to them) this tugged on the emotions of the crowd and might induce some last second thought. An HIV positive mother making the same pledge to her children that she initially stated to the audience in her speech made every word that she said seem more valid and important.

The most important elements that Fisher used in her speech were arrangement. The way that the speech was arranged made it effective from the very beginning. The arrangement allowed her to relate with her audience and then throw in those that did not relate and it made the audience actually realize her struggle and the impact that AIDS has on society.

Mary Fisher believed HIV/AIDS should not be a whisper. Her goal was to open the minds of conservatives who might have had a specific view of the AIDS problem during that time. She stressed the fact that anyone at all could contract it, and that no one was safe in order to remove the misjudgments and cause people not to be afraid to talk about. She knew that if AIDS were able to be discussed openly, then more would be done to prevent it, and more would be done to help those who had it.