**Is There A Middle-Ground For The Phenomenon of Climate Change?**

Climate change is a topic widely discussed in our society, yet the term and understanding of climate change isn’t as widely understood. As Melissa Denchak and Jeff Turrentine of NRDC states, “It’s the longer-term trend that differentiates climate change from natural weather variability…Record floods. Raging storms. Deadly heat.” Climate change has happened forever, yet many would argue that it is just now finding the light of society the past decade. The reason these ideas are finally being broadcast and understood by the public is because of the extreme global changes that have been seen. As the topic of climate change hit mass media there have been many people standing up and trying to make a change while others believe it’s too late to make much of a change. While there’s truth to both sides, how much do we need to be concerned about climate change? To truly understand climate change you first need to understand what it is exactly changing. NASA explains the evidence for rapid climate change is convincing, the claims of climate change include, global temperature rise, warming ocean, shrinking ice sheets, glacial retreat, decreased snow cover, sea level rise, and extreme events. NASA states, “Direct observations made on, and above Earth’s surface show the planet’s climate is significantly changing. Human activities are the primary driver to those changes.” These claims show and confirm climate change as an issue and that we as humans are the driving factor, yet do we need to be concerned if there aren’t any viable changes to be made that are truly realistic to today’s society? It is worth noting that climate change and global warming are used interchangeably, the recent change of the global average temperature is just one aspect of climate change. Understanding climate change is the first step towards any plan to negate or ignore the issue. Climate change has occurred for thousands of years yet very recently ramped up and even more recently became a topic of discussion and debate in the mass media. Understanding what climate change does and effects will greatly prepare an individual to make an educated decision on what impact they will have. Yet the question still reigns, how much should we be concerned?

In understanding the topic of climate change, a reader needs to first look at the topic from all angles. The three articles that have clashing ideas that will be discussed are, “’Get scared’: World’s Scientists Say Disastrous Climate Change is Here” written by Zack Colman and Karl Mathiesen of politico.com, “Are We Really Running Out of Time to Stop Climate Change?” by Rafi Letzter of livescience.com, and “Why Apocalyptic Claims About Climate Change Are Wrong” written by Michael Shellenberger of forbes.com. All these articles contain different types of persuasion or tactics to enable the reader to agree or see their view.

To start off, Zack Colman and Karl Mathiesen attempt to threaten the reader that climate change is too late to fix. They claim in the title that disastrous weather is upon us and have a picture of a Greece wildfire as the cover picture. This already would bring the reader to a feeling of distraught. They carry on with statistics of top scientists explaining that those number mean that the consequences are inevitable. They then explain that the consequences would affect billions of people, later in that sentence they also state that it will lead to war. While there is no evidence for such a bold claim the reader is only left to feel scared that a war is now inevitable. As they go on to provide a picture of trees burned down due to a drought in California. They make no mention of the photo but continue to talk about the Paris Climate Agreement, making the reader now feel that the article starts to turn very political. As they go on for the last page of the article, they go over conversations and statements made by certain Senates and pledges made by others. The reader is left to feel that changes must need to happen within the government.

The second article by Rafi Letzter questions whether we are really running out of time or not. As the cover picture shows a photo of a baby holding a sign during a climate change strike. This appeals to reader that they need to do the necessary things for the next generation. As Rafi attempts to comfort the reader and makes an understanding that climate change can’t just be stopped and that it’s already here yet there’s still hoped to help. The author goes on to explain the specific deadlines made by the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change). The deadlines being that change is needed to happen by 2030 to truly have a chance to eliminate or better the world from climate change. This makes the reader feel as if the time is now and if anyone must do something it would be them and their generations calling. He continues to nail in the fact that this is not a case of “Can we stop this coming?” because it’s already here. He explains that the deadline of 2030 to hold the world to a warming increase by the end of the century is much more manageable short- and long-term problems. This makes the reader understand that the most crucial time for change would be now, the time of the next 9 years can affect the next 100 whether good or bad. He ends with explaining that the notion of 2030 can be misleading yet gets people into the streets. While that can make the article seem misleading in a whole now, it’s easy to understand that change is truly crucial with the facts he stated.

The last article to be looked at is, Michael Shellenberger of Forbes.com. He begins the article stating that climate driven fires have made koalas functionally extinct and goes on to say that life on earth is dying. This makes the reader sad thinking that beautiful animals are going extinct and its due to climate change, making the reader almost angry because it’s just the start of climate change and other possible extinctions. He quotes a climate change activist saying that the world will end in 12 years of we don’t address climate change. Being such a bold claim it’s hard to truly believe such claim as a reader by the activist he is interviewing when that is said with no evidence or even any further talk of it. He then goes on to tell a story of the activists of climate change being “beat up” and claiming that a genocide like the Holocaust was happening again on a far greater scale and in plain sight, which is obviously untrue. Michael goes on to talk about his environmental organization and states the things they have done within the organization. As a reader it’s easy to understand and almost feel as ease while reading the article as he explains and disproves both sides bold claims. He then goes on to quote an interview with a BBC spokesperson and a “visibly uncomfortable XR (Extinction Rebellion) spokesperson”. As the interview seems to shut down the XR spokesperson disproving their theories. He finishes the article the same way it was started by explaining the problems facing extinctions, as the reader gets on the same page and understands that there are other reasons change needs to occur, yet it isn’t as urgent as being portrayed by others.

The three articles covered all attacked different angles of the argument of climate change, from believing we only have until 2030 to calling the 2030 deadline a borderline hoax and finally the last article explaining that we might not have to be as concerned or feel so strongly about the topic of climate change. To truly make a difference or change in anything, everyone must work together and attempt to make a difference or effort in making a change. To be able to do such a thing, the three conflicting side must come to a compromise.

In my opinion, a compromise that makes sense for all sides involved or not, would be to be conscious toward the subject. Understand that there is a problem and issue and take conscious steps towards lessening the issue in the little ways. If everyone can come together and accomplish little things a change and agreement could be made. If everyone was able to simply remember to turn off the lights, use a reusable water bottle, cut food waste, and attempt to plant something. These little things don’t force upon pressure of the world ending or feel scared that we only have “9 years” but it still lets us be conscious about the problem and make changes that could ultimately help. This decision also doesn’t totally ignore climate change as an issue completely, it gives everyone the opportunity to work together to make a change bigger than they would without the opposing side. If you are completely on the side of climate change not being an issue, doing some simple tasks would not only help the issue of climate change but can simply make improvements to the world and nature you live in. Being conscious to your surroundings is very important for you and next generations whether you believe in climate change or not. If you are on the side that the world is going to be messed up by 2030 if major changes don’t happen, you must understand the significant changes in society and everyone’s daily lives that would happen if such a large change were to happen before 2030. To make such a large change in such a short period of time would be near impossible, it would eliminate businesses, gas cars, and other daily activities that are unavoidable. As these changes simply aren’t realistic, being able to understand the other side and still work towards a goal you believe in seems very beneficial. Working together as one instead of pressuring either side seems to be the best option.

I believe instead of making a reader feel threatened, scared, or even careless; isn’t the right emotion to portray for such a topic. Climate change is dealing with how humans treat the world we live on and the changes constantly happening to the earth. I believe instead of pressuring the reader, simply let both parties know and have an article encouraging unity. At the end of the day that is how change is going to happen. Whether you believe in climate change being a vital issue in the near future or not, everyone should have some care and feel some responsibility for making conscious decisions to help one another and to help the beautiful planet we all reside on. I believe this is the answer to the issue of climate change, understanding the parties and their worries while still making conscious decisions towards a neutral goal of preserving the earth. The answer needs no scientific evidence dating years and years back, simply needs common knowledge working together as one.

Works Cited

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| **Project Portion** | **Ideal Criteria** | **Overall Feedback** |
| Introduction | * Engaging * Shows importance of question * Indicates major parts and content |  |
| Background | * Uses credible, neutral sources * Effectively and sufficiently explains essential information * Written objectively in own words * Well organized and focused paragraphs with transitions * Minimal error |  |
| Analysis | * Smooth transition from background * Summarizes accurately and in own words two opposing answers and one objective answer to the question * Recognizes bias * Reasonable observations about how all sources make their arguments impactful * Well-organized and focused paragraphs with transitions * Minimal error |  |
| Response | * Smooth transition from analysis * Incorporates strong points from sources * Draws a reasonable and well-supported conclusion, answering the question * Provides satisfying conclusion to the project * Good transitions between focused paragraphs * Minimal error |  |