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Rhetorical Analysis of Rob Greenfield’s Argument “Against” Veganism

“The greatness of a nation can be judged by the way its animals are treated.”

-Ghandi (Greenfield)

Rob Greenfield, the author of *An Argument Against Veganism… From a Vegan*, used this interesting quote in his blog on July 33, 2015. During this time, veganism, the environment, and meat consumption was a hot topic of debate. The article was originally published on his personal blog, RobGreenfield.tv. He runs this website to promote caring for the environment, mainly through vegan diets. Vegans or anyone reading Greenfield’s blog are the audience of the article. In the post, the author aims to validate meat consumption in some cultures, but to also further emphasize the author’s belief in the importance of veganism in preserving the environment. In his article, the Greenfield utilizes strong diction and context to enhance his point. (Greenfield)

First off, Greenfield establishes that he is a supporter of veganism. Considering the title, *An Argument Against Veganism*, this was necessary to avoid alienating or confusing the vegans. He does this by passionately elaborating on his lifestyle using words with strong connotations. For example, he explains that he “utterly [supports] eating vegan” (Greenfield). “utterly” emphasizes his ironclad belief in eating vegan to further relate to a vegan audience. (Greenfield).

Greenfield used diction to strengthen the emotional appeal throughout the rest of the article. When he states the “complete disregard to animals being living beings,” he triggers the innate sense within most people that life has value and should not be disregarded. It brings strong emotions to the reader, especially if they are sympathetic to the vegan cause. Other examples include: “the horrifying practices” instead of “bad practices”, “full of dangerous hormones” instead of “hormones”, and “are not created equal” instead of “are not the same” Greenfield uses subtle but interesting word choice when he states that “we do have a moral obligation.” The “do” adds a sense urgency to the phrase, an urgency that can be easily created in a speech but hard to replicate within an essay. It’s both an appeal to a person’s morals and a call to action. (Greenfield)

That subtle phrase with the “do” is also a rebuttal to the idea that humans don’t have a moral obligation. This theme of rejecting the ideas of people who disagree with Greenfield perpetuates itself in many paragraphs. Despite the title, and the fact that he gives four detailed examples describing when meat consumption is okay, his “argument” against veganism provides lines of reasoning for his claim without invalidating veganism. In fact, it further validates veganism. The counter argument leads the audience to consider the impact of eating habits on the environment. By connecting the environment to eating habits, The blogger puts the reader in a position where they are likely to consider the impact of their own personal habits on the environment.

There are several other ways he uses the argument for meat to accentuate his points. He provides a counterclaim to the idea that the “moral obligation” makes humans “so elevated that even just the death of an animal by our hands is inhumane.” This provides a smooth transition that provides more ethical substance in his argument that human lifestyles directly affect the healthiness of the environment. In the end of his essay, the author argues against the argument for meat, giving San Diego as an example of a location where meat eating greatly and negatively impacts the environment. Greenfield also uses a sizeable amount of logos to support any pathos-fueled statements in his points.

*An Argument Against Veganism… From a Vegan* is a well-constructed, carefully tailored for the readers of the author’s blog. The author takes his time in explaining his position on the vegan issue. By ensuring he carefully and passionately provides reasons for what he believes in, he gains the sympathy and ears of the audience. Greenfield uses lots of diction to invoke emotions within the reader, while including facts about the damage to the environment to validate the reader’s feelings. Greenfield’s argument against veganism shares his point of view and reiterates arguments for veganism without alienating his audience by using fantastic word choice and solid logic.