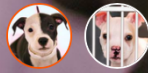


Lives Are on the Line Now

Make an Immediate Impact
for Helpless Animals

DONATE



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Puppy Persuasion

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) is an organization against animal cruelty, believing all animals deserve to live safe and happy lives and should be treated with respect. On their website, they utilize emotional images of their rescued animals to ask for donations. This artifact is found on ASPCA's website. The audience is anyone online or animal lovers who are willing to donate to a good cause. The main features are the dog, the two quotations, and the donate button. Quotations add context to why the dog is there, and the donate button serves as easy access for the audience to decide if they are persuaded to donate. ASPCA's donation page can be interpreted through Burke's Dramatism and Aristotle's Rhetoric.

Dramatism is a technique of analysis of language and thought as basically modes of action rather than a means of conveying information (Griffin, Ledbetter, Sparks). It works to help

us analyze relationships between people and describes life as a play where people are actors on stage displaying their relationships. This theory could be studying the relationship between animals and people or ASPCA and its audience. It helps understand ASPCA's motives with its audience.

The Dramatistic Pentad is used by critics to discern the motives of a speaker or writer by labeling five key elements of human drama: act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose (Griffin et al.). The act is the question for a donation and the look of the puppy's face trying to convince one to donate. The scene describes where and when the act is taking place; ASPCA's scene is where they are asking for the donation which is the website. The agent, the one trying to convince the viewer to donate, is the puppy. It makes one feel like they have a personal responsibility to help the animals in need. The agency is how they are committing the act. They use guilt to convince people to donate to the helpless animals. Guilt is the term to describe the anxious feelings intrinsic to the human condition (Griffin et al.). The purpose is to get donations and help the animals. Dramatism is a rhetoric theory that applies to all relationships, even images.

Rhetoric is used in daily conversations and interactions. To Aristotle, rhetoric is discovering all possible means of persuasion (Griffin et al.). The rhetoric is epideictic speaking, praising or blaming of present day (Griffin et al.). They are praising the overall message of the organization that animals' lives are meaningful and need to be saved. ASPCA uses artistic proofs which are internal proofs that contain logical, ethical and emotional appeals (Griffin et al.). Logos is the logical proof that has supportive evidence and clear arguments (Griffin et al.). It comes from the line of argument in a speech and includes enthymeme.

An enthymeme is an incomplete version of a formal deductive syllogism created by leaving out a premise already accepted by the audience or by leaving an obvious conclusion unstated (Griffin et al.). It is considered the strongest of proofs and is an argument that is not directly stated but can be inferred by the audience. The quotations, “Lives Are On The Line,” and, “Make an Immediate Impact for Helpless Animals,” infer that with peoples’ help and impact they can save animal lives. The major premise, “Lives Are On The Line,” and the minor premise, “Make an Immediate Impact for Helpless Animals,” conclude that an impact will save the animals’ lives. The enthymeme moves us from global principles to specific truth and gives structure to the argument (Griffin et al.).

The second proof is pathos, the emotional proof (Griffin et al.). The image is a strong use of pathos because it’s an emotional picture of a puppy in need. It would have an emotional response from a pet owner or someone who cares about animals because the puppy's face and emotional tagline makes people feel guilty. ASPCA’s use of emotions makes people think of their pets and how they would feel if they were in that position. Emotions that could be involved with this image are anger towards abusers, fear of animals dying, love for animals, or pity for animals in need. The many emotions involved with pathos are anger vs. mildness, love or friendship vs. hatred, fear vs. confidence, indignation vs. pity, and admiration vs. envy (Griffin et al.).

Ethos is the last proof of Aristotle's Rhetoric; ASPCA uses ethos to appear intelligent and reliable. Ethos is the perceived credibility, which comes from the speaker’s intelligence, character, and goodwill toward the audience (Griffin et al.). The perceived intelligence of the speaker is the overlapping of beliefs with the audience (Griffin et al.). The audience and ASPCA

may have overlapping beliefs on animal cruelty. Agreeing on the same things an audience perceives correct makes the speaker seem believable to the audience. The virtuous character has to do with whether the source is a good and honest organization (Griffin et al.). ASPCA shows the important values they have with their donation campaign for animal cruelty. The goodwill of the source is the favorable judgment of the speaker's intention toward the audience (Griffin et al.). They have the audience's best interest at heart if they are targeting animal lovers or people who want to make a difference in society. Rhetoric helps the ASPCA donation image be more persuasive and credible.

Overall, Aristotle's Rhetoric and Dramatism are used in many images and speeches in society. Both of the theories are equally important in the ASPCA's donation page and are effective ways of portraying the purpose of the image. Dramatism shows the relationships and the way the audience and source act towards one another when there is persuasion involved, and Rhetoric shows how ASPCA emotionally, ethically, and logically tries to persuade people to help their cause. Dramatism showed the relationships and motives between the audience and ASPCA accurately, and Rhetoric showed the steps ASPCA took to convince their audience to donate to their important cause.

References

Griffin, E., Ledbetter, A., & Sparks, G. (2014). *A First Look at Communication Theory*(9th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.