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**Gun Violence**

**Introduction**

# The Washington Post published an article *Gun Violence is out of Control* on July 27, 2019, on the topic of Gun Violence in the countries where keeping a gun is legal. The article consists of the letters to the editor by three different leaders of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense movement. Their letters serve as the paragraphs of this article. Aristotle proposes three modes of persuasion that are used by the speakers/writers to convince or persuade their audiences/readers. Those three modes are *ethos, pathos*, and *logos*. *Ethos* means ethical appeal it is a Greek word that refers to the character. The character of the speaker is presented as a reference to integrity to persuade the audience. *Pathos* appeal targets the emotions of the audience. Typical language and examples are used by the persuader to pinch the feelings of the audiences because they are emotionally attached to the subject that is being discussed. If a persuader uses logical arguments to convince the audiences, this approach is called *logos* appeal. This essay discusses the structure of the article analyzing the *pathos* mode of persuasion.

**Body**

First paragraph of the essay is written by Peter Linn. Linn refers to the tragedy of Christchurch in New Zealand where dozens of people were shot by a shooter in a mosque. This incident stirred the New Zealanders in specific and the whole world in general. This was taken as a too sensitive for the New Zealanders that the Christchurch remained haunted by the non-Muslim citizens of New Zealand who were gathered to console their Muslim brethren and condemn the shooter. A state apology was asked by the victims’ families. Linn has artistically selected that example because people are emotionally attached to that incident. Logos appeal has been used by Linn and he after quoting that terrible example indicates that at least 19 people have been eliminated in the United States in the last five days in Gun Violence.

The second paragraph is by Lenore Jarvis who uses the technique of *pathos* more expertly. The targeted audiences of this article are generally the mothers as it consists of the letters by the leaders of the Moms Demand Action movement. They are women and thus it is easier to evoke their feelings especially when their children are a matter of concern. Jarvis starts his letter by mentioning the murders of eleven years old boy and a ten years old girl who died because of gun violence. When mothers and even fathers learn that young children are at the threat of death because everyone is armed with a weapon, they would definitely condemn this practice and would demand a national ban on weapons for civil citizens. Children are not the only target of gun violence, but Jarvis mentions the victimization of children frequently to bring a strong feeling of *awe* and to invoke sympathy from the audiences. If the examples of dead children are not in abundance to quote, Jarvis notes the depression caused by this practice, because his target is the emotional side of his audience. The use of *pathos* is apparent when he says that the presence of firearms at homes provokes the adolescents to commit suicide when they are hurt or heartbroken (Webster, Daniel. 2013). He does not quote a specific example of any such case to support his argument that could make his approach a *logos* appeal approach rather he just indicates the possibility in a way that people can comprehend what he is saying because they might have noticed such incidents around in society. He argues that firearms have created a *national* health crisis, due to feeling of insecurity prevailing everywhere. Jarvis is at his best in using *pathos* appeal here.

The third paragraph written by Rachel Usdan is typical in using *pathos* appeal. This paragraph starts stating that it is too late to take any action against this inhumane practice where many innocent children have already died without any rational cause. Usdan gives specific examples from the past with the names of the children who were slain earlier by the so-called mentally shooters (Follman, Mark. 2018). He argues that every mentioned adolescent was single-handedly worthy of becoming the cause of national action against armed society. The description of the names is an intentional attempt to stir the national memory and provoke the feelings of all the parents. Apart from mentioning the names of the deceased children, Usdan states the passive effects of gun violence that are more dangerous than the direct effects because a larger community is affected by the passive effects. It creates a feeling of terror among parents who are concerned about their offspring. It seems he uses *logos* appeal when he quotes facts and figures, but the dominant appeal is still *pathos* appeal because the intention behind quoting such details is still to provoke the feelings of audiences and to convince them to stand against *Gun Violence*. The article is concluded with Usdan’s words; he appeals to the citizens to put their guns down and demand legislatures’ action against this mad practice so their children will grow up without the fear of immature mortality.

**Conclusion**

The article *Gun Violence is out of Control*is fragmented with *pathos* appeal. Three paragraphs are in fact three letters to the editor of The Washington Post by the leaders of the Moms Demand Action movement in America. The authors use the language and examples to provoke the feelings of audiences and to invoke sympathy from them. A feeling of awe and terror haunts the mind of the person who reads this article. *Pathos* appeal has been used because the targeted audiences are parents especially women among parents who are more sensitive cum emotional towards their children in comparison to men.

**Works Cited**

Webster, Daniel W., et al. *Regulating Gun Sales: An Excerpt from Reducing Gun Violence in America: Informing Policy with Evidence and Analysis*. JHU Press, 2013.

Follman, Mark, et al. "The true cost of gun violence in America." (2018).