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Genre Analysis: Effects of the Media on Anorexia and Bulimia

**Introduction**

The media has become a large part of everyday lives as technology has improved over the years. With this, there is a problem being brought upon society on the ideal image of a person specially that of a woman. Everywhere a person looks, there are advertisements showing young, thin, beautiful, flawless women. These images are portrayed as the ‘ideal’ image to those who are normal everyday women. This has become a problem because those advertisements make women, especially young ones; want to become more like all of these models. This makes these young ladies make drastic health changes like eating less, vomiting, exercising excessively, and continuously keeping track of calorie intake. All of these things are symptoms of anorexia and bulimia whose rate have drastically increased in the past decade. Even the thinnest and most famous women can be affected by what the media portrays to the public. This paper will analyze the article “‘Pretty Little Liars’ star Ashley Benson cried for ‘30 minutes’ after she was told she was too fat for role” by Micaela Hood, which was written about a celebrity who was a victim of name calling due to weight. This article was found on the New York Daily News web page. The second source is a speech named “Killing Us Softly 4: Advertising's Image of Women” by Jean Kilbourne, which explains further how it is that the media is making all of these effects on women and how it is not a new issue but one that has been around for decades. This speech was found at the University of Texas at El Paso’s library Encore search engine.

**Audience and Purpose**

The intended audience for the article on Ashley Benson, is anyone who believe celebrities are always flawless and perfect. The audience on this topic is usually younger readers who wish to look like these celebrities in the future. Therefore, the language used in this genre is fairly simple due to the fact that the readers might be younger and need simpler words in order to understand what is being said. The article shows how even they have others wanting to say they need to look a certain way to be accepted by society. The audience knows that celebrities are constantly being perfected and photo shopped on pictures so that they can look a certain way to the public’s eye. The purpose of this article is to show that nobody in this world is perfect, not even those whom normal people idolize. Because, even they are shamed for their image while regular people think they are perfect.

The intended audience for the speech is anyone who is willing to realize that the media has always and always will play a role in anorexia and bulimia. The audience knows that the images shown on magazines, billboards, pictures, etc. are usually photo shopped and fixed up. However, people still seem to think that what is shown is the ‘ideal image’ and still want to and make an effort to look that way. Constantly seeing these image can and will lead to serious obsessions on image and then develop into health issues like anorexia and bulimia. The purpose of this speech is to inform the audience about the fact that images are being used to portray something that is not even real. There is a part in the speech where the picture of a woman is being fixed to look ‘perfect’ and the finished product looks nothing like the actual picture of the woman.

**Rhetorical Issues: Ethos, Pathos. Logos**

The rhetorical issues on the article are very easy to point out. The way that credibility is established is by showing a celebrity being shamed for her size rather than showing any other normal person. The emotion being portrayed is confidence. This is by showing that even celebrities are not perfect therefore, no one is. This helps people know that everyone has insecurities even if their faces and bodies have been all over magazines and billboards. The logos that is being shown in this article is simply the logic reasoning that not everyone looks the way the models in magazines do. Many people, especially young ones, think that anyone can look like the women on magazine covers but Benson’s response to being body shamed shows how no one actually looks like that even though she too has been on magazine covers.

When talking about the video, the rhetorical issues are also pretty clear to the public and audience. Kilbourne establishes credibility by starting her speech on how her research began. She tells the audience how this is actually the fourth part of a research she started years ago. The way that she uses pathos is by showing images that hurt women. These images do not hurt them physically but rather emotionally and mentally. The ads that are being shown by the speaker are of women being turned into object like cars and beer bottles that appeal to men. This emotional appeal persuades women to agree with the speaker and start being conscious about the fact that the media does in fact have negative effects in women. This also connect to Logos because when women see these images and the real intention of them, they realize that the women are being objectified and they reason themselves to stop being attracted to those types of advertisements.

**Structure and Delivery**

Both of these genres are very different but they both have really good things to offer and their own ways of portraying the information. The article is simple and short therefore, the delivery of the information is easy and fast. Since it is so short and straight forward, it is easy to understand what the author is trying to say. This genre allows no time to stop reading, day dream, or become uninteresting. This is because it is fast and easy to read in one sitting rather than taking breaks in between or maybe not reading the whole thing because of the length.

However, the video of the speech is kind of the complete opposite. The speaker states the point of the video very early on which could cause some viewers to eventually get bored and start watching something else. A speech can sometimes be long and may even become boring since there is a lot of repetition. However, repeating information in a speech is necessary so that the audience remembers the truly important points and it also helps the speak stay on topic.

**Conclusion/Synthesis**

These two genres are extremely different but they both serve the same purpose. The one that is most effective in conveying its message is the speech. The article is simple and fast to read but sometimes and article that short could be vague and leave the reader with questions and doubts. On the other hand, a speech is longer and offers more in depth analyzing of the topic. Even if a speech seems extremely long, an audience member could take those moments to come up with questions for the speaker until they become interested in the topic again.

All genres have their positive things as well as their negative ones. However, they are all necessary because audiences vary and as a presenter, speaker, or author, they have to know which genre to choose. Everyone has to know how to use and analyze genres so that they do not choose wrong when it comes to presenting something.

References

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