
Rhetorical Analysis Of Noam Chomsky's Prospects For Survival

Noam Chomsky is a well-respected man for the extensive work he has done in linguistics and philosophy. Chomsky is "one of the most influential public intellectuals in the world" (UA), he has published over one hundred books and many articles whom people refer to all the time for information because they know how much knowledge that Chomsky has on these topics. Prospects for Survival was something that Chomsky wrote and presented to a crowd of people and was later published. In this essay, Chomsky is arguing that due to the human species being so intelligent that it is the reason that we are killing ourselves and that we have outlived our species lifespan. In this essay, Chomsky talks about nuclear weapons, climate change, and neoliberals. Chomsky uses many historical facts to back up his claims. The goal of this essay by Chomsky is to inform predominantly young students about these things that have happened and are currently happening so that they can do more research on these very important topics. He is trying to bring out fear in these people in hopes that they will be proactive and make a change. Chomsky uses different modes of persuasion to convince the audience of his argument. These three arguments are ethos, pathos, and logos. Chomsky uses these in a way to bring out the emotions of the audience and also use some logic.

In the essay, Chomsky starts by talking about different types of species and uses information that he got from one of the leading biologist Ernst Mayr. Mayr studies life on earth and he claims that the most successful organisms are those with little intelligence such as bacteria that mutate quickly, and as you go up the scale of intelligence in species the lifespan of those species with more intelligence is much lower than those who are not as high. Chomsky uses a quote from Mayr that "it is better to be smart than to be stupid". This is something that is the main idea throughout the essay and Chomsky wants the audience to keep this in mind and he provides evidence to prove this. Chomsky then goes into his first piece of evidence and that is the development of nuclear weapons. He says that the end of World War II was one of the most important moments in human history. This is because it was a time of joy for people all over the world because of the dark times the war brought to so many. But he also says it was a bad point in human history "with the dawn of the nuclear age, an age overshadowed by the dark realization that human intelligence had created the means for terminal destruction". People did not know at the time but the radioactive elements that were being put all over the earth from these nuclear weapons would only hurt the earth and the human species. Chomsky talks about how the United States was superior in the economy and military. The war gave the United States enormous power with no threats from other countries because of such power that they held. Chomsky brings up that the citizens of the US were in danger of utter destruction because

Need help with the assignment?

Our professionals are ready to assist with any writing!

GET HELP

other countries were scared of the power that the US held. But it all could have been averted as Stalin the leader of Germany at the time made an offer to the US to end the Cold War. His proposal was dismissed, and Chomsky believes that if there was peace then we would not be at the threat we are at today. Chomsky uses the idea of Nuclear weapons to argue that because of the intelligence of the human species we developed weapons that can wipe out our entire species.

Chomsky then goes on to the second threat to the human species and that is climate change. Chomsky doesn't speak much about this topic because he believes that it is such common sense, "anyone with eyes open should be aware that the dangers are severe, and imminent". One of the worst contributors to this problem according to Chomsky is the United States. Chomsky uses a report by the US business press: "The number of oil rigs and gas rigs in the US has almost doubled... While two dozen nations are coordinating to cut oil production and rein in the global supply glut". Chomsky says that while most of the world is taking steps toward facing this imminent crisis only a few people who are very rich and powerful are moving in a different direction to benefit themselves. This problem of climate change goes along with Chomsky's argument that intelligence is threatening to species because humans have developed many amazing things such as cars, factories, and many other things but most of these things that we have created are only hurting us because of their effect on climate change. Chomsky says that one of the most important events was when almost all nations met in Morocco to try to agree on the Paris agreements, but the US Republican Congress would not accept it. This was a big thing because if they agreed then changes would have been made then by all the nations to try to fix climate change. With all this evidence to prove that climate change is a real issue, it is repeatedly thrown on the back burner. The Department of Energy is scheduled to lose 900 million dollars for its budget, and "even mention of climate change is coming under ban, while regulations are being dismantled and every effort is being made to maximize the use of fossil fuels". Chomsky only speaks briefly about climate change because he believes it is common sense and if people do not realize it then we are in really big trouble.

Climate change and the rise of nuclear weapons are the two "sledgehammers" that are threatening the human race, but Chomsky also talks about neoliberalism which is policies that take money from the poor and give it to the rich leaders. Chomsky explains that in 1979 when the neoliberal experiment was just taking off when Alan Greenspan the Federal Reserve chair testified to congress about the economy he was managing. He told Congress that "workers are too intimidated to ask for decent wages, benefits, and working conditions". These were signs of good economic health according to neoliberal standards. One of the big reasons that Chomsky brings up neoliberalism in his essay is because he states that, "Neoliberal policies are specifically directed toward undermining the regulatory power of the government, hence undermining the capacity to avert the blows of the sledgehammers". He is saying that these policies reduce the power that the government has in regulating things such as nuclear

Need help with the assignment?

Our professionals are ready to assist with any writing!

GET HELP

weapons and climate change, and with this less power it is harder to fix these problems and since they are imminent, we cannot avoid them with neoliberal policies.

With Chomsky's arguments of the two main sledgehammers that are threats to humans, he uses three different types of methods to persuade the audience in agreeing with what he is trying to prove. The first method he uses is logos. Logos has to do with persuading the reader using logic. Chomsky does this in many ways. One way that he does this when he is talking about nuclear weapons and the agreement that Khrushchev tried to make with the US. He wrote to the Kennedy administration and he "was trying at once to carry through a major reduction in the conventional forces and to follow a strategy of minimum deterrence". He was trying to make peace with the US because the whole world knew how powerful the US was and they were scared by the power, but when the US declined the offer of peace Russia had no choice but to send missiles to Cuba for protection from the US. Chomsky brings up this point in history because it is logical by Russia to try to make peace and stop the US from using nuclear weapons and maybe if they took that offer then we would still not be threatened by them today.

Another thing that Chomsky does to persuade the audience is he uses pathos in a very good way. Pathos means to persuade the audience by appealing to their emotions. This is something that is used throughout the whole essay. The main idea that he puts into people's minds is fear. Fear of these two sledgehammers landing a hit on society. From the beginning of the essay, Chomsky tells us that the human species is already at a disadvantage due to being so intelligent. Then when he talks about nuclear weapons, he puts fear into people's minds by showing them what can happen if they get used. He does this by giving historical facts such as the report started by Obama in the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists that discussed how the modernization of the US nuclear force program with "revolutionary new technologies that will vastly increase the targeting capability... This increase in capability is astonishing-boosting the overall killing power of the existing US ballistic missile forces by a factor of roughly three". This report is scary to anyone. Chomsky does this because he wants to have people feel scared and by doing so people may do more research on the topic to see more about this issue.

The final thing that he uses in his essay to persuade the reader is he uses ethos. Ethos is used to convince the reader that what is being argued is credible due to the authority of the author and his credibility. He uses this throughout the entirety of the essay when he uses historical facts. He doesn't just show his credibility in one field but multiple. In the beginning, he talks about biology, then he talks about the history of nuclear weapons, he then talks about climate change and neoliberals. With all of these, he also shows a very well understanding of politics from all over the world and the US relations with other countries. One place that he does this is when he is talking about nuclear weapons and the power that the US held after World War II. He shows a very well understanding of global politics in the essay along with a great understanding of the roles that countries have in global warming. Chomsky wants the reader to

Need help with the assignment?

Our professionals are ready to assist with any writing!

GET HELP

do some research on their own about the topics that he is talking about as when he talks about many of the ideas in the essay he doesn't completely give a full explanation for each because he talks about so many things it would make the essay hard to follow. He shows his credibility very well in these ways and that is why he is such a respected figure in his field.

After reading Chomsky's essay and going back to look at all the details that he talks about one can conclude that his use of rhetorical appeals allows him to provide a valid argument that the audience will agree with. His strategy of using the three different methods to persuade the audience is a very important reason why it is such a credible essay. The way that he goes into so much detail about each of his arguments leads the audience to believe that what he is saying is true and he doesn't just use facts but gives the reader a sense of fear as to what may happen to them. Most people when they read this they realize that these things are true because they have seen many of these things happen in real life or have heard about them before. This along with his extensive knowledge of many different topics, the use of trying to bring out people's emotions, and him showing his credibility is what makes Chomsky's arguments fulfill the purpose of the essay.

gradesfixer.com

Need help with the assignment?

Our professionals are ready to assist with any writing!

[GET HELP](#)