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# Drowning In The Depths Of Climate Change: An Exploration Of Polar Bear Rhetoric

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DROWNING IN THE DEPTHS OF CLIMATE CHANGE:  
AN EXPLORATION OF POLAR BEAR RHETORIC

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## Dedication

Para mis abuelitos, en paz descansen.

DROWNING IN THE DEPTHS OF CLIMATE CHANGE:  
AN EXPLORATION OF POLAR BEAR RHETORIC

by:

Gloria Leticia Bebber

THESIS

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

The issue of climate change has generated much debate among politicians and scientists through the years, with each side having different opinions with respect to the causes of climate change and its environmental consequences (Hassol, 2004). However there is no general political/social consensus. For the general population, details on the causes and consequences of climate change get lost in translation due to the extensive use of scientific terminology and political agendas. Consequently, miscommunication occurs between the scientists, politicians, and the public. In order to relate to the public, organizations have used polar bears to bridge the gap between science and the public's interest. Campaigns illustrate polar bears as endangered species that need the public's support. Commonly, the campaigns use various methods to appeal to the public's interest. The purpose of this study is to explore how polar bears have become emblematic to climate change issue by analyzing the efforts of the three environmental organizations Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), World Wildlife Federation (WWF), and Center for Biological Diversity (CBD), and two major corporations the Coca-Cola Company and Nissan. This study will also be analyzing one video from organization Plane Stupid for its shock value.

#### 1.1 Environmental Movement

The origins of the environmental movement in the U.S. date between the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century and arose in response to exploitation of natural resources (Dunlap & Mertig, 1990). During this time period, the focus was on the management of natural resources which was led by conservationist Gifford Pinchot and supported by President Theodore Roosevelt (Dunlap & Mertig, 1990). However, other individuals such as John Muir

were more concerned about the preservation of the land for the sake of the land. The two principles conservation and preservation, though at times conflicting, led to the establishment of national parks and agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service and establishment of organizations such as the Sierra Club (Dunlap & Mertig, 1990). With the start of World War I, the environmental movement became idle.

Following World War I, the United States was hit with “massive environmental calamities such as flooding and the Dust Bowl, as well as by the Great Depression” (Dunlap & Mertig, 1990, p. 20). The second wave of the environmental movement began during the Franklin Roosevelt administration in order to stimulate economic recovery and “emphasized the mitigation of resources problems (e.g., flood control and soil conservation) as well as the development of resources (e.g., energy through the Tennessee Valley Authority)” (Dunlap & Mertig, 1990, p. 2). Furthermore, by the 1960’s a new wave had surfaced and had changed the environmental movement into modern environmentalism. Although concern over the environment was present during this time period, a focus “on the effects of environmental pollutants on human health” emerged (Cox, 2006, p. 45). The public began to question the pollution coming from factories and refineries, toxic waste, pesticides, and radioactive fallout from nuclear testing (Cox, 2006). During this time, Rachel Carson published her infamous book *Silent Spring* where she attacked the agricultural business and their use of the harmful pesticide DDT (dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane) (Cox, 2006).

Moreover, the first Earth Day was celebrated April 22, 1970 (Cox, 2006). Cox (2006) explains “students, public health workers, new activist groups, and urban workers had coalesced into a recognizable movement controls on industry and governmental activities (p. 46). Furthermore, it is estimated that approximately 20 million joined in the celebration of Earth Day

(Cox, 2006). The surfacing of the environmental movement in the 1960s and early 1970s came with the creation of new federal agencies, such as the Environmental Protection Agency, and environmental laws, for example National Environmental Policy Act (Cox, 2006; Dunlap & Mertig, 1990).

## 1.2 Climate Change

Over the years the issue of climate change has been discussed publicly, politically and internationally. Currently, the underlying dilemma seems to revolve around potential cause(s) of climate change. Although some scientists blame natural causes, many have indicated that the disturbance in climate change may also be the responsibility of human beings (Hassol, 2004). Before elaborating on the cause(s) of climate change, it is important to fully comprehend the issue.

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, IPCC, (2007) climate change is a “complex, interactive system consisting of the atmosphere, land surface, snow and ice, oceans and other bodies of water, and living things” (p. 96). Climate is often defined as weather and characterized as the atmospheric component. The climate system changes over time by influence of its own internal dynamics and changes in external factors (forcings) (IPCC, 2007, p. 96). External forcings include natural occurrences such as volcanic eruptions and solar variations. In addition, external forcings can be caused by human changes to the atmospheric composition.

The climate system is powered by solar radiation. Consequently, there are three primary ways to change the radiation balance of the earth: 1) changing the incoming solar radiation (e.g. changes in the Earth’s orbit or in the Sun itself), 2) change the fraction of solar radiation that is reflected (albedo) (e.g. changes in cloud cover, atmospheric particles or vegetation), and 3)

altering the longwave radiation from Earth back towards space (e.g. changing green gas concentrations) (IPCC, 2007, p. 96).

The fundamental human influence on climate change has been through the increase of greenhouse gases. The greenhouse effect is defined as the rise in temperature which the Earth experience due to the entrapment of solar energy from gases in its atmosphere, i.e. water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane. The greenhouse gases have increased through the years with the burning of fossil fuels such as coal, natural gas, oil and gasoline. “For instance, the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has increased by about 35% in the industrial era, and this increase is known to be due to human activities, primarily the combustion of fossil fuels and removal of forests (IPCC, 2007, p. 97). Since the greenhouse effect warms the Earth, the additional burning of fossil fuels increases the temperature which is likely affecting the global average weather and contributes to climate change (U.S Environmental Protection Agency, 2009). The National Resources Defense Council (2005) reports “the largest single block of ice in the Arctic, the Ward Hunt Ice Shelf, had been around for 3,000 years before it started cracking in 2000. Within two years it had split all the way through and is now breaking into pieces” (para. 2).

The effects of climate change can be seen all over the world. Staudt (2009), from the National Wildlife Federation, argues that evidence demonstrates that the sea level is rising, tree mortality has increased in North America due to warm weather and the arctic ice is rapidly melting. Furthermore, NASA satellite pictures indicated the arctic ice caps have been contracting at an alarming rate of 9 percent each decade (National Resource Defense Council, 2005). The changes in climate have endangered the habitat and survival of many species. IPCC reports “Changes in climate have the potential to affect the geographic location of ecological

systems, the mix of species that they contain, and their ability to provide the wide range of benefits on which societies rely for their continued existence” (Watson, Zinyowera, Moss, & Dokken, 1997, p. 2 ). Furthermore, IPCC reports “Climate change is projected to occur at a rapid rate relative to the speed at which forest species grow, reproduce and re-establish themselves” (Watson et. al., 1997, p. 2).

### 1.3 Polar Bears (*Ursus maritimus*)

The interest in polar bears emerged after the viewing of Davis Guggenheim’s *An Inconvenient Truth*. Al Gore was speaking of climate change and how it affects polar bears and showed a computer animated video of a polar bear swimming toward an ice pack. When the polar bear tried to get on the ice pack, it broke and disseminated into the water; the polar bear began swimming with no ice pack in sight. During this video, Mr. Gore spoke about the impact climate change has on the polar bears’ habitat and mentioned the risk of polar bears drowning. Out of the entire documentary what I connected with climate change were polar bears and I wondered if other people could possibly make the same association. Despite being a vicious animal, polar bears have a societal image as being cute and tender making them a good representation for climate change.

As a result of climate change, the habitat of polar bears has been deeply affected by the melting ice caps. Furthermore, “sea ice allows polar bears to exploit the productive marine environment by providing a platform from which they can hunt seals” (Durner et al., 2009, p. 26). Polar bears are “highly specialized surface-based predators on sea ice dependent phocid seals, primarily ringed seals (*Phoca hispida*) and bearded seals (*Erignathus barbatus*)” (Durner et al., 2009, p. 26). Amstrup (2003) argues the dissemination and composition of Arctic sea ice is essential for the survival of wild populations of polar bears. On the other hand, several scholars

contribute the decline in population in some regions to polar bear hunters. Taylor, Laake, McLoughlin, Cluff, & Messier (2008) conclude that climate change will ultimately determine the future amount and allocation of the species, “in archipelago of Canada’s High Arctic, negative effects of climate change have yet to be reported for polar bears. Here, bear hunting remains of major cultural and economic importance to many northern residents” (p. 144).

#### 1.4 Endangered Species Act

Currently under the U.S. Endangered Species Act (ESA), the polar bear is listed as threatened. In order for a species to be listed under this act, it must go through an extensive process. A species can either be classified as endangered or threatened. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (2003) define endangered as “any species that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range” and threatened as “any species that is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range” (para.2). There are two ways in which a species can be classified as either endangered or threatened under the ESA, through the use of a petition or through the candidate assessment process (Nicholopoulos, 1999, p. 1). A person can petition the Secretary of the Interior, who is responsible for categorizing a species as either endangered or threatened under the Federal Endangered Species Act, to add or remove an animal or plant from the list of endangered and threatened species.

The use of the candidate assessment process is more complex. Under this process, biologists from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service identify the species as listed candidates. Biologists place a species under the candidate assessment process because they have “sufficient information on their biological status and threats to propose them as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), but for which development of a proposed listing

regulation is precluded by other higher priority listing activities” (U.S. Fish and Wildlife, 2007, para.1). The following factors, under the ESA, determine whether or not a species can be classified as endangered or threatened: “[1] the present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of the species’ habitat or range; [2] overutilization for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes; [3] disease or predation; [4] the inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms; and [5] other natural or manmade factors affecting the species’ continued existence” (Nicholopoulos, 1999, p.6). Incidentally, Kuhn (2010) states:

The Secretary of the Interior listed the polar bear as a threatened species under the ESA in May 2008. The Secretary cited the significance reduction of sea ice as the reason for the listing, but was careful not to mention the role of [climate change] (p. 127).

The ESA is designed to protect the species specified under the act and under specific sections (7 & 9) activities that contribute to the endangerment of the species would have to be regulated (Kuhn, 2010). For example, since carbon emissions are one of the causes of climate change under the ESA, emissions in the United States would have to be controlled. However, Kuhn (2010) explains that the regulations are misguided and go against the essence of the ESA. Additionally, “there are other legally available options to keep the polar bear and other species on the ‘endangered’ or ‘threatened’ lists without triggering the regulation of carbon emissions” (Kuhn, 2010, p. 128). The refusal to control greenhouse gas emissions in the United States is in part due to the negation of anthropogenic influence on climate change.

Listing the polar bears as endangered under the ESA and citing the reduction of sea ice as the cause make polar bears a symbolic representation climate change; “the polar bear has become the poster child for species threatened by [climate change]” (Kuhn, 2010, p. 127).

## 1.5 Study Overview

Through the use of textual analysis, I will be examining three environmental organizations, Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), World Wildlife Fund (WWF), and Center for Biological Diversity (CBC), two major corporations Nissan and the Coca-Cola Company, one zoo Berlin Zoological Garden and a non-profit organization Plane Stupid. After thorough assessment of environmental organizations, the organizations and companies mentioned previously were chosen based on their utilization of polar bears as emblematic to climate change. Although several organizations provide information on the endangerment of polar bears due to climate change, the organizations in this analysis not only provide information on polar bears but used their image to create a direct link between climate change and the endangerment of the species. Furthermore, I will argue that although polar bears are symbolical a good representation a of climate change, the anthropomorphizing of the species subsist. Additionally, campaigns tend to minimize civic engagement despite appealing to a broad audience. Therefore, the proposed research seeks to answer the following questions:

RQ1: How have polar bears been used to represent climate change?

RQ2: What approaches do campaigns use to connect polar bears and climate change?

RQ3: Who are the campaign's target audience?

RQ4: What action do campaigns expect their audiences to do regarding the conservation of polar bears?

The first research questions is the central inquiry in this analysis , specifically I will be looking at the rhetoric used by the campaigns. The second research questions focuses on the methods used by the campaigns to create a connection between polar bears and climate change, namely this questions seeks to demonstrate that the campaigns all have a similar techniques to influences the

public's ideology regarding climate change and polar bears. The third research question seeks to demonstrate that the campaigns appeal to a broad audience. Lastly, the final research question inquires about the audience's involvement in the campaigns.

## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

In order to understand the effect of environmental advocacy campaigns, it is critical to conduct a thorough examination of the current literature. The evaluation of literature will further develop the framework established in this research. First, since this study is aimed at analyzing environmental campaigns, the literature review will identify the meaning of environmental advocacy campaigns. Second, perception of environmental communication will be discussed. Third, by means of understanding the organization of campaigns, a brief explanation of campaign structure will be addressed. Fourth, the literature review will provide an overview of the effectiveness of using animals in campaigns. Lastly, one of the research questions in this analysis aims to answer who the campaigns' intended audiences are. Therefore, a review of the public sphere and situational theory of the publics is addressed in order to provide a response to the question.

#### 2.1 Environmental Advocacy

According to Cox (2006) environmental advocacy is a symbolic discourse aimed at supporting conservation, preservation, and “support for both natural and human environments and the well-being of the life these environments sustain (p. 244). An environmental advocacy campaign is therefore “defined broadly as a strategic course of action involving communication undertaken for a specific purpose” (Cox, 2006, p. 244). In addition, Cox (2006) identifies nine modes of environmental advocacy: political, litigation, electoral politics, public education, direct action, media events, community organization, green consumerism, and corporate accountability. Each mode differs considerably in goals, media use, persuasion strategies, and target audience (Cox, 2006, p. 246). For example, political advocacy campaigns seek to influence legislation or

regulations while public education campaigns seek to influence societal attitudes and behavior (Cox, 2006, p. 247). Therefore, each mode is classified under three different categories; political and legal channels, direct appeal to public audiences, and consumer and the market. Political advocacy, litigation, and electoral politics fall under political and legal channels. Litigation campaigns pursue “compliance with environmental standards by agencies and business” and electoral politics “mobilize voters for candidate and referenda” (Cox, 2006, p. 247). Direct appeal to public audiences consists of public education, direct action, media events, and community organizing. Direct action influences “specific behaviors through acts of protest, including civil disobedience” (Cox, 2006, p. 247). Media events “create publicity or news coverage to broaden advocacy effects” and community organizing “mobilize citizens or residents to act” (Cox, 2006, p. 247). The last category is composed of green consumerism and corporate accountability. Green consumerism uses “consumers’” purchasing power to influence behavior” and corporate accountability consist of “consumer boycotts, shareholder actions” (Cox, 2006, p. 247).

## 2.2 Environmental Perception

Environmentalism “can be considered an umbrella term subsuming a wide variety of practices toward and ways of constructing the appropriate management of human relationships with the natural world” (as cited in Cantrill, 1993, p. 67). In addition Cantrill (1993) states that human beings treat the natural world as a commodity and support the profitable exploitation of its resources without expressing concern over environmental degradation (p. 37). Cantrill (1993) notes that although many do not express concern over the environments well being, there is a new movement that is taking action against the maltreatment of the Earth. To address environmental change is to engage in environmental advocacy. “Anyone who tries to mold

opinions and policies about how to treat the Earth could be considered an environmental advocate” (Cantrill, 1993, p. 68). Cantrill (1993) suggest that those people involved in environmental advocacy see themselves as rational and concerned citizens who “use personal interest as an anchor in assessing argument and engaging the environment and display selective attention to environmental concerns and values (p. 68). Cantrill (1993) further explains that an advocate’s understanding of the environment is influenced by direct or mediate exposure to environmental concern. Furthermore, perception of environmental communication can be expressed in three mediators: sociocultural influences, informational bases, and strategic – actional concerns (Cantrill, 1993, p.70).

Consequently, Cantrill (1993) states sociocultural influences function as information-seeking behaviors and assist in determining meaning. Cantrill (1993) states “much of what we ‘know’ about the environment may depend on our age, economic well-being, region of the country, and other demographic characteristics as well as the dominant cultural forces which surround us” (p.72). Cantrill (1993) breaks down sociocultural influences into two factors: demographics and cultural. Cantrill (1993) declares that cultural factors are more dominant than demographical factors “in the construction and interpretation of environmental discourse” (p. 76). Although research findings demonstrate that a person’s age, education level, and gender have an influence on environmental perception, “the typical finding of no reliable relationship between social variables and environmental behavior (e.g., Honnold, 1984, Neuman, 1986) strongly suggest we focus on more than demographics in studying and advising advocacy campaigns” (Cantrill, 1993, p. 73).

Cantrill’s (1993) second mediator, informational bases, are formed by “a set of beliefs generated by personal experience, interpersonal networks, and the mass media” and “unlike

sociocultural beliefs, this subsystem is more tangible to the extent it is reflect in overt cognition” (p. 76). Furthermore, Cantrill (1993) states research investigating how a person’s experience affects the perceptions of environmental discourse is limited (p. 77). The concept of *well informed futility* is described as a concept that is based on as a person’s inability to take action upon an environmental issue finding contentment with merely being informed of an environmental issue (Cantrill, 1993, p. 81).

The last mediator, strategic-actional concerns, “refer[s] to individuals’ ways of thinking about themselves as participants in environmental settings, what they want for and anticipate happening in their environment, and what they intend to do to achieve their goals vis a vis the environment” (Cantrill, 1993, p. 82). Cantrill (1993) states that a way to understand environmental reasoning is to recognize the four different types of publics that attend to advocacy: all-issue, single-issue, involving-issue only, and apathetic. All-issue publics are concerned with a wide range of environmental issues; single-issue publics focus their attention on one or a few environmental issues, involving-issue only publics “are driven by immediate circumstance or popular agenda by the media,” and apathetic public communicate little to no concern about environmental issues (p. 83).

Furthermore, it is important to examine where the public is receiving their information on environmental issues. Corbett and Durfee (2004) state “like news coverage generally, media reporting of science is tied to classic definitions of news and is often event driven, using the occasion of a scientific meeting or publication in a major scientific journal to spur attention to an issue” (p. 130). Moreover, the public’s interest is usually elevated if there is a dramatic connection (Corbett and Dufree, 2004). Although the public might be exposed to environmental issues, there is a need of a clear understanding of the issues. Studies conducted on the public’s

understanding of climate change concluded that people commonly had misconceptions on the causes, consequences, and solutions of the issue (Corbett and Dufree, 2004).

### 2.3 Campaign Structure

Furthermore, Rogers and Storey (1987) identified four features vital to communication campaigns. First, a campaign must be purposeful meaning that specific outcomes are expected from the campaign. Second, a campaign is aimed at a large audience. Cox (2006) argues “a campaign’s purpose usually requires an organized effort that goes beyond the interpersonal efforts of one or a few people to persuade person or a small number of others” (p. 250). Third, a campaign has a defined time limit. An audience’s response to a campaign will be made by specific date (Cox, 2006, p. 250). Although a campaign might not reach their goal within a set time period, it will develop another campaign which will face the issue with a different approach. Last, a campaign involves organized set of communication activities. Rogers and Storey (1987) indicate communication activities in a campaign are evident in message production and distributions.

### 2.4 Animals in Campaigns

An effective strategy to promoting environmental issues is the use of animals. In order to educate Americans on the prevention of wildfires, Smokey Bear was created and is now celebrating its 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Corbett (2006) states “animal messages were brought to you by the pop culture industry, whose job it is to create, disseminate, and sell meaning” (p. 176). Corbett (2006) further explains that the industry is not trying to sell you the animal per se, but what it represents, i.e. a bald eagle represents freedom (p. 176). Animal representation is introduced into a person’s life at an early age through pop culture (Corbett, 2006, p. 178). “Based on common meanings presented to use from an early age, animals are the perfect

shorthand communication symbol” (Corbett, 2006, p. 179). Furthermore, Corbett explains that “environmental groups have used grizzly bears, wolves, spotted owl, and other critters to represent pristine places in need of protection, and raise funds to use in that protection” (Corbett, 2006, p. 180).

Moreover, Corbett (2006) states “visually, animals are concrete, picturable, and evoking of emotion” (p. 181). According to Kellert (1983) “animals may represent a metaphorical device for people to express basic perceptions and feelings about the nonhuman world” and “function as a symbolic barometer of people’s fundamental beliefs and valuations of nature” (p. 243).

## 2.5 The Public Sphere

The issue of climate change does not only affect the environment, it also affects the way individuals subsist. That is why it is important to have dialogue between people in order to help implement change. Habermas speaks about the importance of a public sphere. The formation of public spheres subsequently allows action to take place. If people discuss the issue of climate change, their incentive to act will be greater.

Habermas (1989) defines the public sphere as “the sphere of private people come together as a public...to engage them in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatized but publicly relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labor” (p. 27). Habermas argued that there are “two types of public spheres: (a) general public spheres that develop spontaneously and provide a medium for unrestricted communication and (b) procedurally regulated ones (like parliaments), which try to produce cooperative solutions to practical questions” (Mater, 2006, p. 163). General public spheres can be viewed as public gatherings; it is where people openly discuss issues without taking immediate action. For example, a general public sphere can be a coffee house. People gather to converse over several

topics, however no direct action is taken, rather the topic is presented and may be brought up at a later time in a different and larger public sphere. When the general public sphere becomes larger problematization occurs; once problematization occurs a regulated public sphere can take place (Mater, 2006).

Habermas generates four models of action that the public sphere could take. These models are: teleological, normative, dramaturgical, and communicative. Teleological action refers to the “relations between an actor and a world of existing states affairs” (Habermas, 1984, p.87). Normative action is defined as “relations between an actor and exactly two worlds. Besides the objective world of existing states of affairs there is the social world to which the actor belongs as a role-playing subject” (Habermas, 1984, p. 88). The third action is dramaturgical action which refers to “social action as an encounter in which participants form a visible public for each other and perform for one another” (Habermas, 1984, p. 87). Here the actor presents herself/himself to the public as she/he would like the public to perceive him/her. In other words, in the dramaturgical action the actor presents his/her personal views on an issue which in turn shape the way people perceive him/her. The last model is the communicative model. The communicative model can be defined as “the interaction of at least two subjects capable of speech and action who establish interpersonal relations (whether by verbal or by extra-verbal means)” (Habermas, 1984, p.86).

In the public sphere, the model of action that is ideal in order to act on an issue is the communicative model. This model allows the actors to establish an understanding about the action situation and their plans of action in order to organize their actions by way of agreement (Habermas, 1984). When reaching an understanding, the actors can then focus on generating a solution to an issue, thus creating a regulated public sphere. This concept is based on *strong*

*idealizations* which serve as a criterion for assessing various forms of communicative action (Dayton, 2002). According to Cooke (1994), the idea of strong idealization by Habermas includes four presuppositions (Cooke, 1994). First, the participants are using identical expressions in the same way. Second, all applicable arguments are incorporated. Third, the only force used is the force of a superior argument. Finally, participants are only motivated by the common goal of finding an improved argument.

## 2.6 Situational Theory of Publics

Taken from “Dewey’s concept of how a public develops as a group of people facing, recognizing, and organizing to solve a problem” (Major, 2000, p. 226). The situational theory of publics (STP) was developed by Gruing in order to “predict and explain public response to and communication behavior about issues, problems and conflicts” (Major, 1993, p. 252). Gruing’s theory consists of five key variables which include three perception variables and two communication variables (Major 2000).

The first perception variable is problem recognition which provides a measure of how frequently a person thinks about a problem. The second perception variable is constraint recognition. Constraint recognition “measure whether or not the individual believes that she or she has that he or she has the ability to solve the problem or issue” (Major, 2000, p. 226). The third perception variable, level of involvement, was developed by “Krugman’s concept of involvement and has been measured as how connected an individual is with an issue or problem” (Major, 2000, p. 226). The two communication variables in STP are information processing and information seeking. Clarke and Kline (1974) define information seeking as the “planned scanning of the environment for messages about a specific topic,” and information processing as “unplanned discovery of a message, followed by a continued processing of it” (p. 233).

## 2.7 Theoretical Framework: Rhetorical Criticism

Foss (2004) states “We live our lives enveloped in symbols. How we perceive, what we know, what we experience, and how we act are the results of the symbols we create and the symbols we encounter in the world” (p. 3). The “process of thinking about symbols, discovering how they work, and trying to figure out why they affect us” is known as rhetorical criticism (Foss, 2004, p. 3). Foss (2004) states that the process of rhetorical criticism “begins with an interest in understanding particular symbols and how they operate” (p. 7). Moreover, rhetorical criticism is comprised of three dimensions: “(1) systematic analysis as the act of criticism, acts and artifacts as the object of analysis in criticism; and understanding rhetorical processes as the purpose of criticism” (Foss, 2004, p. 6). Systematic analysis as the act of criticism connotes a more sophisticated investigation and understanding of symbols and responses to them (Foss, 2004). Foss explains:

“An act is executed in the presence of a rhetor’s intended audience... because an act tends to be fleeting and ephemeral, making its analysis difficult, many rhetorical critics prefer to study the artifact of an act – the text, trace, or tangible evidence of the act” (p. 6).

In order to reach a wider audience, rhetorical acts become rhetorical artifacts when an act is transcribed and printed, recorded on film, posted on a website, etc. (Foss, 2004). Rhetorical criticism included both acts and artifacts (Foss, 2004).

Lastly, Foss (2004) indicates that the purpose of rhetorical criticism not only contributes to rhetorical theory, it also improves the ability to communicate. Additionally, Foss (2004) states rhetorical criticism makes us more sophisticated audience members and “as a result, we become more engaged and active participants in shaping the nature of the worlds in which we live” (p. 8).

The examination of literature of environmental advocacy campaigns and the public sphere is substantial to the research questions proposed in this analysis. It is essential to differentiate between the types of modes of environmental advocacy in order to understand which method the campaigns in this research utilize. Furthermore, the examination of the public sphere and situational theory of publics allows the researcher to determine who the intended audience is.

## Chapter 3

### Methodology

This study began after the viewing of Davis Guggenheim's "An Inconvenient Truth." The documentary featured a computer animated polar bear which was swimming endlessly trying to find a patch of ice where it would be able to sit and hopefully survive. After viewing the documentary, I became fascinated with the connection between polar bears and climate change. I began researching environmental campaigns that directly associated the effects of climate change with polar bears, but the dearth of literature on this subject led me to this thesis project. Therefore, this study will examine six polar bear campaigns, three environmental organizations, two major corporations, and one non-profit organization.

To fully study these campaigns, a textual analysis of the campaigns was conducted. A textual analysis "includes gathering data, analyzing the information, and making likely interpretations" (Wall, Edwards, & Porter, 2007, p. 280). The word "text" refers to the interpretation of the meaning of text, which can be in the form of books, television programs, films, videos, and scripts (McKee, 2003). Furthermore, "textual analysis involves examining the authors' purposes for the text and asking whom the intended audience is" (Wall et. al., 2007, p. 279). Specifically, the texts were analyzed using generative criticism method. Foss (2004) states generative criticism is a nine-step process: "(1) encountering a curious artifact; (2) coding the artifact in general; (3) searching for an explanation; (4) creating an explanatory schema; (5) formulating a research question; (6) coding the artifact in detail; (7) searching the literature; (8) framing the study; and (9) writing the essay" (p. 411).

Foss (2004) states that "the act of criticism usually begins when you encounter an artifact that raises questions for you" (p. 412). In this analysis the curious artifact is a polar bear. As

mentioned earlier, the interest in polar bears developed after the viewing of *An Inconvenient Truth*. As a result, an investigation of campaigns that use polar bears began. Once the selection of campaigns was established, coding of the campaigns began. Foss (2004) describes coding as noticing and interpreting major features of the artifact. Initially, the campaigns were coded under five major features; ice, nurturing, drowning, extinction, emotion. However, when coding the artifact in detail, the features were reduced to four major themes; image events, emotionality, anthropomorphism, and irreparable hope. The themes encompass the initial five major features and allow for a more thorough examination of the campaigns' structure. The following sections describe the campaigns that were used in this analysis.

## 2.8 Environmental Defense Fund

The Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) was established in 1967 as a nonprofit organization initially taking action against the use of the pesticide DDT (dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane). Today the EDF confronts several environmental issues and, “guided by science, evaluates environmental problems and works to create and advocate solutions that win lasting political, economic and social support because they are nonpartisan, cost-efficient and fair” (Environmental Defense Fund, 2011a, para. 3).

Furthermore, images of polar bears can be seen throughout the EDF website. When navigating towards their Donate tab, an image of a polar bear family can be seen in the right hand corner. The same image appears on EDF's section on climate change (labeled as global warming on EDF's website). EDF has also created a fictional story about polar bears, *Polar Bear Odyssey*. *Polar Bear Odyssey* centers on the lives of three polar bears, a polar bear mother and her two cubs, and their journey through the change in their environment due to climate change. Recently a sequel of *Polar Bear Odyssey* was released.

## 2.9 World Wildlife Fund

The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) was established on September 11, 1961 by Europeans from different backgrounds (scientist, naturalist, business and political leaders). The WWF works with 100 countries and supported by 1.2 million members in the United States and 5 million members globally (World Wildlife Fund, 2011). “WWF's unique way of working combines global reach with a foundation in science, involves action at every level from local to global, and ensures the delivery of innovative solutions that meet the needs of both people and nature” (World Wildlife Fund, 2011, para.1).

Moreover, while EDF used a polar bear family image in their Donate tab, WWF opted for the image of a single polar bear. For those seeking to make more than just a simply donation, WWF provides an adoption kit for a minimum of \$25 and a maximum of \$250. Each adoption kit comes with a polar bear adoption certificate and photo. A polar bear plush is include in adoptions over \$50. WWF has also created an application on Facebook with a virtual polar bear, My Polar Bear. With My Polar Bear, Individuals get to feed, play, and clean the polar bear’s ice platform while facts about them are displayed.

## 2.10 Center for Biological Diversity

The Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) was formed by individuals protecting the Mexican Spotted Owl. Although their initial focus was on the conservation of the owl’s habitat, CBD has made it their mission to protect several species through the use of lawsuits, petitions, and policy advocacy (Center for Biological Diversity, 2011).

Consequently, CBD is interested in protecting the endangerment of the polar bear. In doing so, CBD has started a campaign to help the polar bear, *Save the Polar Bear Campaign*. The campaign is geared toward political action. Those who are interested in protecting the polar

bear are asked to sign a petition sent to the president of the United States urging him to fully enforce environmental acts. CBD has also created a video showing the damaging effects of climate change to the polar bear's environment.

### 2.11 The Coca-Cola Company

For several years the Coca-Cola Company has used polar bears in their product advertisements as a symbol of tenderness and family unity during the holidays. In 2007, the Coca-Cola Company joined forces with WWF to bring awareness and support for polar bears, thus creating the Polar Bear Support Fund.

The Coca-Cola Company created a website for the Coca-Cola Company Polar Bear Support Fund where information on polar bears and how to help can be easily accessed. The website's background features different images of polar bears, clicking on different tabs will result in different background images. Each image also features a red circle when clicked on presents a fact on polar bears. Links to WWF's website are provided and recommendations on how to reduce an individual's carbon footprint are described.

### 2.12 Nissan

One of the biggest factors in climate change is the use of automobiles. It is then no surprise that the automotive industry is eager to develop a car that will decrease the damaging emissions fueling from motor vehicles. Nissan has created just that, a 100% electronic car. The name of this car could not be more soothing, Leaf™. The word leaf has a direct connotation to the environment. Therefore, Nissan is trying to create a connection between the environment and its new car. Normally, automobiles are attributed to pollution, however, with the name Leaf™ Nissan is trying to paint a different picture in the audience's mind.

In order to promote the creation of the new electronic car, Nissan developed a commercial that would associate its success to the environment. Thus, Nissan created a commercial that featured a polar bear. In the commercial the polar bear leaves its home and travels to the house of a Nissan Leaf™ owner. The polar bear then thanks the owner for doing his part in helping the environment.

### 2.13 Berlin Zoological Garden – Knut

To the public zoos are seen as an option for conservation, education, and recreation. It is estimated that annually American zoos experience 150 million visitors (Milstein, 2009). In Germany the birth of two polar bears caused international sensation. Knut and his brother, born on December 2006 at the Berlin Zoo, were rejected by their mother (Moulson, 2011).

Unfortunately Knut's brother survived only a few days. Knut's zookeeper Thomas Dörflein became his adoptive parent and reared the polar bear. Dörflein would often camp out at the zoo to bottle feed Knut every two hours (Moluson, 2011). "Images of Dörflein lovingly bottle-feeding and playing with Knut were beamed across the world, and the keeper's round-the-clock care of the fluffy cub melted the hearts of animal lovers everywhere" (Moore, 2011). Many dubbed this international obsession as Knut-mania. Knut even graced the cover of *Vanity Fair* in their special Green Issue magazine with Leonardo DiCaprio in 2007 (Moluson, 2011).

Moreover, in 2008 Dörflein passed away and shortly after, in March 2011, Knut unexpectedly died. News of Knut's death quickly spread over media channels. Animal rights activist blamed the death of Knut on the Berlin Zoo stating that the polar bear was neglected and the zoo was more interested in the financial gain of the polar bear than its well-being (Moore 2011). Since the birth of the polar bear animal rights activist have been criticizing the treatment of Knut. "In 2007, an animal-rights activist caused an uproar among Knut lovers when he was

quoted as saying that the popular polar bear should be put down rather than be raised as a 'domestic pet' (Moore, 2011). Consequently, the debate over zoo establishment continues to date.

#### 2.14 Plane Stupid

Plane Stupid is a European based nonprofit organization designed to take nonviolent action against aviation expansions. Originated in 2005 after opposing an aviation industry conference, Plane Stupid has three main goals; (1) end short haul flights and airport expansions, (2) stop aviation advertising, and (3) a just transition to sustainable jobs and transport (Plane Stupid, 2011). Unlike the other campaigns previously mentioned, Plane Stupid focuses on one particular contributor of climate change, the aviation industry. Plane Stupid explains that "aviation is the fastest growing cause of climate change" (Plane Stupid, 2011a, para.2). In order to bring awareness to this issue, Plane Stupid released a polar bear film. The film featured polar bears falling from the sky and dying from the impact of the fall.

Although Plane Stupid's film is gruesome, it is interesting that a polar bear was chosen to represent the effects of climate change. Furthermore, although Plane Stupid does not provide supplemental information about polar bears, its video will be analyzed for its shock value. Additionally, the campaigns selected for this study were chosen because the campaigns not only provide information on polar bears but used their image to create a direct link between climate change and the endangerment of the species. WWF is also known globally for its conservation efforts and the Coca-Cola Company has been using polar bears to promote their product for several years.

## Chapter 4

### Analysis

After an examination of the campaigns, four major themes emerged; image events, emotionality, anthropomorphism, and locus of the irreparable/rhetoric of hope. Based on the method described in chapter 3, the campaigns were analyzed using the four themes referenced above. The use of image events allows the audience to correlate the melting of ice with the endangerment of polar bears. This in turn allows the audience to become emotionally connected to polar bears. Additionally, the depictions of polar bears by the campaigns strengthen the emotional connection already created. The representation of polar bears in the campaigns can be viewed as being anthropomorphism. Usually, human characteristics are embedded in the behavior of the polar bears. Lastly, campaigns tend to implore against the audience's apathy. Subsequently, the sections that follow will describe these themes in depth.

#### 3.1 Image Events

Delicath and DeLuca (2003) define image events as “staged acts of protest designed for media dissemination” (p. 315). According to Delicath and DeLuca (2003), there are three main functions of image events; (1) they broaden the scope of participation in the public sphere, (2) deliver argument in powerful ways capable of creating opportunities for debate, and (3) “image events and other critiques performed through spectacle animate the possibilities for public discourse and expand the range of relevant rhetorics in social controversies by generating new lines of argument” (p. 325). Furthermore, Delicath and DeLuca (2003) suggest image events are “a postmodern form of argument that employs acts of protest to deliver images as argumentative fragments that serve as inventional resources for public deliberation and which shift the responsibility for argument construction to audiences” (p. 317). DeLuca (1999) argues “when

taken seriously as rhetorical activity, image events challenge a number of tenets of traditional rhetorical theory and criticism, starting with the notion that rhetoric ideally is ‘reasoned discourse,’ with ‘reasoned’ connoting ‘civil’ or ‘rational’ and ‘discourse’ connoting ‘words’” (p. 14). DeLuca (1999) believes environmental groups use image events as “tactics that operate in the territory of the system but outside the sense-making rules or the lines on the grid of intelligibility of the system – a necessary condition if they are to create social movement” (p. 20). Moreover, DeLuca (1999) states “environmental groups practice image events not merely to call attention to particular problems but also to challenge the discourse of industrialism and to move the meanings of fundamental ideographs” (p. 52). Delicath and DeLuca (2003) believe image events provide the responsibility for argument construction to audiences, offer unstated propositions, and advance indirect and “incomplete claims in ways that function to block enthymemes and advance alternatives” (p. 315).

There are four image events that are seen throughout the campaigns; melting of ice caps, polar bear(s) swimming, polar bear(s) floating on ice, and polar bear(s) drowning/dying (extinct). These were classified as image events because they offer a way for campaigns to further illustrate the interpretation of climate change. Although DeLuca’s (1999) typical representations of image events feature individuals protesting the destruction of nature (Delicath and DeLuca, 2003; DeLuca 1999) the image events described in this analysis were classified as such because they are a visual protest of the ideological negation of the disruption of Earth’s climate. Furthermore, the illustration of such acts (melting of ice, polar bears swimming, polar bears floating on ice, and polar bears drowning) make claims of the legitimacy of climate change and the endangerment of polar bears. The following paragraphs will describe the image events in this analysis in depth.

First, each campaign illustrated the melting of ice caps. For example, WWF Belgium (2008) and climatetracker.net created an ad video titled “Polar bear – victim of climate change.” The video features two different images of ice caps melting. The first is a panoramic view of an ice cap surrounded by pieces of ice that have melted off. The second image is that of an actual ice cap melting. This image is replayed twice, once as a panoramic view and the second is a close up of the ice that melted off. The same image event is observed in two other videos. Additionally, the video advertisement for the Nissan Leaf™ begins with the close of up melting ice. After the second drop, a full view of melting ice caps is displayed. The Save the Polar Bear Campaign opted for a digitalize version of ice caps melting. Unlike the other image events, the video featured for this campaign a polar bear walking on the ice caps as part of it was melting off. It also showed the piece of the ice cap completing melting into the sea.

The second image event is a polar bear swimming. WWF Canada (2008) broadcasted a video titled “Polar Bears in Peril” featuring Noah Wyle, actor and WWF supporter. A female polar bear jumps in the sea and her cub follows after. The video then illustrates how the polar bears are swimming and are only surrounded by water, no floating ice can be seen. The same clip is used in the ad for WWF Belgium (2008). The Nissan Leaf™ advertisement also used the image event of a polar bear swimming. Unlike the WWF ads, the Nissan Leaf™ used a close up of a single polar bear and an underwater view of the polar bear as it was swimming.

The third image event is a polar bear on floating ice. This image event can be seen in the campaign advertisements of WWF Belgium, WWF Canada, WWF Finland, Save the Polar Bear, and in the Nissan Leaf™ advertisement. The Nissan Leaf™ advertisement features a single bear sitting on ice, whereas other campaigns feature a female polar bear with her cub. Moreover, WWF Finland (2008) captured the image event in a creative way. The female polar bear and her

cub are seen sitting on what appears to be a piece of melted ice in the middle of a busy intersection in a major city.

The last image event is a polar bear drowning/dying (extinct). One of the major concerns the campaigns have regarding polar bears are the possibility of them drowning and/or being extinct. Though this concern is featured mainly in the campaigns' language, which will be discussed later, there are two campaigns that address this issue in a campaign video. *Plane Stupid* broadcasted a rather disturbing video of polar bears falling from the sky to their death. Furthermore, *Save the Polar Bear Campaign* draws on the notion of polar bears drowning. In the video ad, a polar bear is seen walking on a large piece of floating ice. As he walks, the ice melts and it is abruptly underwater. The polar bear is seen struggling to get out of the water and unexpectedly another polar bear appears. The ad abruptly ends after the last scene. The viewer is left wondering if the polar bears drowned.

As a whole, these videos have a dramatic impact on the audiences' perception of climate change and polar bears. Additionally, the images events presented in the videos can be read as (1) a claim: 'climate change is affecting the polar bear's habitat' or 'climate change is a legitimate issue,' or (2) as evidence for claims such as: 'polar bears are drowning because of climate change' or 'polar bears will become extinct because of climate change' (Delicath and DeLuca, 2003).

### 3.2 Emotionality

Similar to the ad referenced in the previous paragraph, the campaigns in this research feature emotionally appealing ads. Hung (1997) explains that there are two types of emotions, basic emotions and social emotions. Basic emotions are defined as instinctual biological reactions. There are five basic emotions (two positive and three negative) happiness, love, anger,

fear, and sadness (Hung, 1997). On the other hand, social emotions (i.e. humor, guilt), derived from basic emotions, are defined as social reactions which are developed at another stage in human development through the socialization process (Hung, 1997). Furthermore, Hung (1997) states “due to the universal tendency of basic emotions, consumers tend to have similar emotional responses,” therefore, making basic emotions more appropriate for advertisements (p. 23). Emotional appeals in advertisements are defined as “ads that elicit consumers’ emotional responses, either pleasant or unpleasant” (Hung, 1997, p. 25).

As an illustration, the following paragraphs will demonstrate emotionally appealing images/videos seen throughout the campaigns referenced in this research. The images will be broken down into three categories, happiness/love, sadness, and fear. These categories were selected after an examination of images/videos used in the campaigns. Although happiness and love were defined as two separate emotions in the previous paragraph, for the purpose of this research these two basic emotions will be classified as one.

### 3.2.1 Happiness/Love

Illustrations of happiness/love were found to be used mainly on the website of the campaigns. The image which was frequently used is that of a female polar bear and her cub(s). Figures 1 – 2 illustrate the variety of this image. The pictures illustrate both an image of happiness and love; hence, these two emotions have been categorized as one.



Figure 1: WWF Polar Bear Web Page

Figure 1 reveals the image used in WWF’s polar bear website. When clicking on the section titled “More on the Polar Bear,” the image displayed in the main page does not change. Similar images of a female polar bear and her cubs are used extensively on the website. For example, navigating toward the “Adopt a Polar Bear” (Gift Center) section of WWF’s website, another image of a female polar bear and her cub emerges. Images that display happiness/love allow the audience to associate that emotional state toward polar bears.



Figure 2: EDF Home Page

Another example is shown in Figure 2. The image is taken from the EDF’s web site, “Global Warming” section, and features a female polar bear in an embrace with her cubs. Although there are other images that can be associated with climate change (global warming), EDF selected the polar bear as a strong representation of the change in our environment. It is

evident the EDF proposes to their audience to create a connection between climate change and polar bears.

### 3.2.2 Sadness

The illustration of sadness is displayed in the campaigns by depictions of a polar bear(s) on ice platforms. The image of a polar bear(s) on ice platform draws back to the explanation of image events. It has been argued that research suggests the sea ice is melting and therefore the polar bear is losing its habitat. By using images that display this scenario, the campaigns are trying to emotionally draw their audience's awareness to the severity of the issue. Accordingly, campaigns will use images that reflect upon the issue of melting ice and the struggles polar bear encounter.



Figure 3: WWF Belgium Video

As an illustration, Figure 3 exemplifies the concept of melting ice. In the video, a female polar bear and her cub are seen on a slender ice platform and surrounding them are only water and a few other thin platforms. The female polar bear is later seen diving in the water swimming away as her cub follows (WWF Belgium, 2008).

Moreover, the second edition of *Polar Bear Odyssey* has an unfortunate ending. The story narrates that after swimming for two straight days, Aakaga and her cubs are confronted with a storm and an ice pack is nowhere in sight. A wave hit the polar bears and sends Qannik

away from Aakaga and Siku. Although the story does not state that Qannik died, it can be assumed that she drowned. “Before she sinks down to rest, she looks carefully and sniffs for Qannik. If the current carried them, perhaps it carried her as well... but there is no sign of her strong, faithful daughter. Aakaga begins to accept that Qannik is dead” (Environmental Defense Fund, 2011c).

### 3.2.3 Fear

Fear evoking images are most commonly seen in the environmental campaigns. These fear provoking images are used as a tactic to get the audience to contribute to the organization’s cause, in this case the conservation of polar bears. However, some campaigns take fear evoking images to an extreme. For example, a European based grassroots organization named Plane Stupid, which targets the aviation industry in Europe, released a polar bear film. The film’s purpose is to inform the audience of the amount of greenhouse gasses a flight emits. The film explains “an average European flight produces 400kg of greenhouse gases for every passenger... that is the size of an adult polar bear” (Directactioncam, 2009). However, in explaining this action the film takes a gruesome approach. Polar bears are seen falling from the sky to their death. An image of this is displayed in Figure 4.



Figure 4: Plane Stupid - Polar Bear Film

Plane Stupid's polar bear film directly relates human involvement to climate change and drastically presents this outcome to the audience. Although the campaigns in this analysis approach fear appeals in a more subtle way, direct human involvement is never mentioned.

Furthermore, the fear appeals seen in the campaigns only address the fear of polar bears being extinct and/or drowning as a result of the depleted sea ice. As an illustration, CBD's polar bear campaign addresses fear by making the audience aware that due the melting sea ice, polar bear populations are decreasing and 2/3 of polar bears can potentially be extinct by 2050, refer to Figure 5 (Center for Biological Diversity, 2011b).



Figure 5: CDB - Polar Bear Ads

Incidentally, the campaigns use fear appeals to get the audience to contribute to the conservation of the polar bear habitat and/or the research performed by the organization. Although these actions can aid organizations in their research, the habitat conservation depends on the audience's contribution in reducing the effects of climate change.

Finally, emotional appeals in campaigns serve as a method to grasp the attention and interest of the audience and in turn create a link between their emotions and polar bears. In

addition, emotional appeals persuade the audience's to believe that the polar bears need to be saved.

### 3.3 Anthropomorphism

Anthropomorphism is defined as “the tendency to imbue the real or imagined behavior of nonhuman agents with humanlike characteristics” (Epley, Waytz, Cacioppo, 2007). Specifically, this study looks at the humanlike characteristics given to polar bears. de Waal (2001) suggests “closeness to animals creates a desire to understand them, and not just a little piece of them, but the whole animal” by doing so “we employ all available weapons in this endeavor, including extrapolations from human behavior” (p. 40). Furthermore, de Waal (2001) implies the need to distinguish between animalcentric anthropomorphism and anthropocentric anthropomorphism. de Waal (2001) explains that animalcentric anthropomorphism takes the animal's perspective and anthropocentric anthropomorphism takes the human perspective. Subsequently de Waal (2001) states

Anthropomorphism comes in many shapes and form. The type to be treated with caution is the naïve, humanizing (anthropocentric) type. Most students of animal behavior, however, try to understand animals on their own terms. Animalcentric anthropomorphism is a common heuristic tool: it generates testable ideas (p. 77).

Lastly, de Waal (2001) explains “to make proper use of anthropomorphism we must be view it as means rather than an end” and “we should use the fact that we are animals to develop ideas we can put to test” (p. 78).

In the previous section, I described emotionally appealing images found in the referenced campaigns. The images displayed human behavior and therefore were categorized as such. For example, images containing a mother and her cubs in an embrace were categorized under

happiness /love. Although I was not present when the picture was taken, I can conclude that the mother and her cubs are demonstrating acts of happiness/love because of my familiarity of human behavior. Examples of anthropomorphism can be found extensively in the campaigns being studied and are addressed in the sections below.

### 3.3.1 EDF

The EDF published a story about the journey a polar bear family encounters in a world affected by climate change. The story, titled *Polar Bear Odyssey*, centered around 3 main characters, a female polar bear and her two cubs. In the story, the polar bears are given an Inuit name (indigenous people of the Arctic); Aakaga (mother), Qannik (snowflake), and Siku (ice) (Environmental Defense Fund, 2011). According to Sowards (2006) the “process of naming gives [animals] individuality and emphasizes their human characteristics” (p. 53). EDF personalized the polar bears in the story and designated a section for readers to “meet” them. The section describes the polar bears with greater detail and describes the polar bear using human characteristics (refer to Figure 6).

<p><b>Aakaga</b> (means "My Mother" in the Inuit dialect of Inupiaq)          Age: 5 years          Height: 6 ft          Weight: 550 lbs          Personality: She's an independent woman -- the cubs' father left long before they were born. She dug their den, gave birth in winter, and will care for the twins -- alone -- until they're about 2 years old.</p>	
<p><b>Qannik</b> (means "Snowflake" in the Inuit dialect of Inupiaq)          Age: 3 months          Height: 20 inches          Weight: 26 lbs          Personality: She's a precocious big sister who loves wrestling with her brother -- especially since she has a tendency to win -- but who is also very alert to her mother's instructions.</p>	
<p><b>Siku</b> (means "Ice" in the Inuit dialect of Inupiaq)          Age: 3 months          Height: 18 inches          Weight: 22 lbs          Personality: He's the more playful of the two cubs -- the family clown. He's a bit of a runt, but acts a lot bigger than his size and enjoys scrapping with his bigger sister.</p>	

Figure 6: EDF - Polar Bear Odyssey

### 3.3.2 Nissan

In 2010, Nissan released an advertisement for their new electronic car, the Nissan Leaf™. The polar bear journeyed from its environment to the house to embrace the owner of the Nissan Leaf™. During its travel, the polar bear is seen in different scenes which create an illusion of feelings. For example, one scene is that of the polar bear under a bridge while it is raining outside, thus the polar bear appears to be sad. The embrace can be also be perceived as anthropomorphizing the polar bear. The polar bear and human embrace can be interpreted as the polar bear having knowledge of the effects of the automotive industry to its habitat.



Figure 7: Nissan Leaf™

### 3.3.3 WWF

Several campaigns are contingent on the audience's financial contribution for the construction of a successful campaign. Usually the contribution is rewarded with some form of incentive. The concept of adopting an animal generates from this design. WWF allow the audience to symbolically adopt a polar bear. The adoptions range from \$25 - \$250 and incentives range from a certificate to a 30" plush polar bear.

Although the adoption is purely emblematic, the idea of adopting a polar bear can be construct a separation between the human world and the natural world. The concept of climate

change and polar bears are much more complex and require more action from the audience. While an adoption of a polar bear might make the audience feel like they are contributing to the cause, the issue of climate change requires much commitment. Furthermore, it also takes the human notion of adoption to the polar bear.

#### 3.3.4 Knut



Figure 8: Knut and his zookeeper Thomas Dörflein

The dilemma over zoos has been around since the mid-1900s and by the 1970s “rose to a constant critique that has shaped much of the ongoing dialogue among zoo professionals, interdisciplinary scholars, animal rights activists, and others (Milstein 2009, p. 29). Hanson (2002) argues that zoos are “a middle ground between science and showmanship, high culture and low, remote forest and cement cityscape, and wild animals and urban people (p. 7). Furthermore, Mullan and Marvin (1999) state “the presentation of captive wild animals in the zoos reveals more about the human societies which have constructed them – and whose members roam freely through them – than about the animals which are confined within them” (p. xviii).

The German polar bear Knut was an international sensation and a famous attraction at the Berlin Zoo. The polar bear captivated the hearts of Germany’s citizens and people around the world. Consequently, the news of his sudden death in March 2011 was mourned worldwide. Although many speculations of his death were made, i.e. taunting by female bears, negligence,

on April 1, 2011 reports stated that Knut's sudden death was due to drowning after falling into his pools due to brain swelling (Moulson, 2011).

According to Sowards (2006), personification of animals “occurs through describing them as babies who could be human and need to be mothered just as human infants require” (p. 53). The personification of Knut began when his zookeeper, Thomas Dörflein, decided to care for the polar bear. At times Thomas slept in the same room as Knut in order to give the polar bear its required 2 hour bottle (Moulson, 2011). Thomas and Knut formed a special bond that was noticeable to visitors and other zookeepers at the Berlin Zoo.

The anthropomorphizing of polar bears constructs a connection between the human world and the natural world. It also serves as an explanation into an unfamiliar territory such as that of the polar bear. Furthermore, the audience is able to relate with the polar bears because they project human values. Conversely, this type of anthropomorphism (anthropocentric) is what de Waal (2001) is opposed to.

### 3.4 Irreparable Hope

There are three forms in which polar bears are discussed in the campaigns. First, polar bears are seen as harmless, defenseless creatures that need to be helped. Frequently words such as cute and cuddly are used to describe polar bears. Second, campaigns tend to alarm the audience of the danger of apathy, by using locus of irreparable and regularly tackle the notion of extinction. Cox (1982) defines locus of irreparable as “a way of organizing our perceptions of a situation involving decision or action; its use calls attention to the *unique* and *precarious* nature of some object or state of affairs, and stresses the *timeliness* of our relationship to it” (p. 229). Furthermore, Chadwick (2009) states the locus of the irreparable “often leads to longer contemplation of action, more information seeking, incremental action that leaves open the

option of deciding later... and/or extraordinary measure to protect the unique for being lost” (p. 7).

Lastly, as opposed to the locus of the irreparable, one campaign preferred to use rhetoric of hope which brings forward a positive outcome. According to Chadwick (2009) “instead of creating a problem-focused vision that encourages limits and restraint, the rhetoric of hope would create an opportunity-focused vision that builds excitement and enthusiasm” (p. 18). The following paragraphs describe the rhetoric that was found in the campaigns.

#### 3.4.1 WWF

The three videos that were examined from WWF were *Polar bears – Victims of climate change* from WWF Belgium, *WWF – Help save polar bears* from WWF United Kingdom, and *Polar bears in Peril* from WWF Canada. All four videos addressed the importance of audience participation for the welfare of polar bears while using locus of irreparable as a mechanism.

The ad from WWF Belgium was made as if the polar bear were communicating with the audience. The informative ad enlightens the audience of the polar bear’s habitat and address major issues that are causing its endangerment. For example, the polar bear articulates to the audience how it is able to survive in the arctic, “With a good layer of fat and a thick fur, I’m well equipped to face the severe cold,” and talks about the threat of climate change “With global warming the ice is melting and I have to swim further and further away to find food. It’s exhausting. For us it is more than time. Choose public transport. Act now” (WWF Belgium, 2008). The ad suggests that the use of public transportation will decrease the effect of climate change and in a subtle way informs the audience that it is a matter of time before polar bears vanish.

The ad from the United Kingdom takes a more drastic approach by insinuating that the polar bears are already becoming extinct and the audience needs to take action immediately. For example, the ad starts by saying “Are you ready to say goodbye to the polar bear?” and proceeds to explain that polar bears hunt and raise their young in the arctic but the “ice is shrinking” (WWF United Kingdom, 2009). Furthermore, the ad poses a question to the audience “When the ice goes where do the polar bears go?” (WWF United Kingdom, 2009). In order to protect their arctic habitat, WWF pleads to their audience to “Please call text bear to 82727 or go online and adopt a polar bear today. Because we don’t want to say goodbye forever” (WWF United Kingdom, 2009).

Moreover, WWF Canada (2008) followed the same model as above in their ad “Polar Bears in Peril”. Actor and WWF supporter Noah Wyle took the task of narrating the story. Mr. Wyle explains that polar bears are struggling to survive due to the ice “melting all around them” and food “becoming harder to find as they lose their hunting grounds” (WWF Canada). As an explanation for the melting of the arctic, WWF Canada (2008) implies that “Climate change is happening right now and it’s leaving mothers weaker and unable to provide for their young, and cubs dying without enough to eat” and “polar bears are one of the first victims at risk of extinction” (WWF Canada, 2008). Furthermore, Mr. Wyle urges the audience to take action by either calling or going to the WWF website “If we don’t act now it could be too late for polar bears. It’s all up to us, please call or go online right now” (WWF Canada, 2008). Pleading to the audience, WWF imply that the lives of polar bears depend upon their empathy.

#### 3.4.2 EDF

In the first online publication of *Polar Bear Odyssey* in 2010, which was released as a six part episode, EDF introduced a polar bear mother and her two cubs. The mother and her cubs

were given an Inuit (indigenous people from the Arctic) name; Aakaga meaning mother, Qannik meaning snowflake and Siku meaning ice. Although a fictional story, the tale tries to educate the audience on the dangers polar bears encounter in the Arctic while they venture from the inland maternity den to the Arctic sea. Throughout the story EDF reiterates the importance and intricacy involved finding pack ice. For example, the story states that getting to an ice pack “before it breaks up and melts is like making or missing the only train out of town – and the “train” is leaving a bit earlier every year because global warming is melting the pack ice faster (EDF 2011). EDF implores their audience to take action and help fight climate change by either contacting a member from Congress or donating to the organization.

You can do your part right now by making a donation and/or by contacting your members of Congress to support a strong climate and energy bill. With your help, we can save Aakaga, Qannik, Siku, and thousands of other polar bears just like them (EDF 2011).

The second publication of *Polar Bear Odysseys* (2011), EDF published more in detail information on the risk polar bears endure. For example, in the previous edition EDF explained that climate change was changing the polar bear’s habitat. Although the first edition did mention that climate change has had an impact on the Arctic sea ice, it did not provide an explanation of how this is achieved. However, in the second edition an overview of climate change is provided. The story explains that “pollution from around the world leads to the accumulation of greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere; the gasses trap solar heat and increase temperatures” (Environmental Defense Fund, 2011c, part 2, para.5). Furthermore, the Arctic’s “gleaming white ice naturally reflects sunlight, bouncing back the heat of the sun” (Environmental Defense Fund, 2011c, part 2, para.6). “Once the Arctic was icebound year-round; now the amount of open

ocean is increasing each year as rising temperatures melt the ice a little earlier each spring” (Environmental Defense Fund, 2011c, part 2, para.5).

### 3.4.3 The Coca-Cola Company Polar Bear Support Fund

Although the Coca-Cola Company speaks of the risk polar bears are confronted with due to climate change, it does not frame the issue as irreparable. With its polar bear support fund, the Coca-Cola Company is contributing to four main research initiations; polar bear patrol in Russia, research and collaring, conservation planning, and impact studies. A website was created in order for the audience to familiarize themselves with polar bears and “what you can do to help the planet” (The Coca-Cola Company, 2011). The audience is encouraged to “send a polar bear e-card to a friend, make a donation to WWF or ‘adopt’ a polar bear. Whether you do one thing or do them all, you can make a difference” (The Coca-Cola Company 2001). Additionally, the website serves as an education tool for the audience to familiarize themselves with polar bears and climate change. For example, the website displays on a map the location of the polar bear populations in the Arctic. Below the map, the caption reads “spread out across the Arctic, polar bears can be found in northern Canada, Alaska, Greenland, Norway and Russia. Estimated to number approximately 22,000, polar bears live on the sea ice, a platform from which they hunt for food” (The Coca-Cola Company, 2011). Since “polar bears are dependent on the sea ice, the changing climate and subsequent melting of the ice puts the polar bear at risk” (The Coca-Cola Company, 2011).

Incidentally, the website informs the audience on how they can help fight climate change. Under the Take Action tab, suggestions on how to reduce our human impact on climate change are listed. These suggestions are broken down into three categories, Be Climate Conscious, Conserve Water, and Recycle and Reuse (The Coca-Cola Company, 2011). The suggestions

listed are simple steps anybody can take. For example, under the Be Climate Conscious the Coca-Cola Company advises the audience to “unplug your phone, laptop, and MP3 charger when you’re not using them” (The Coca-Cola Company, 2011). Another recommendation under the Conserve Water is “turn off water while you brush teeth” (The Coca-Cola Company, 2011).

#### 3.4.4 Nissan

The Nissan Leaf™ commercial also opted out of using locus of the irreparable. Instead the commercial has a positive message and does not insist on the finical contribution of the audience, rather than using a scare tactic it gives the audience hope that the automotive industry is taking the effects of climate change seriously. The description on the commercial reads as follow “Seeing its arctic home melting away, a lone polar bear sets out on a great journey to thank someone who’s trying to help” (Nissan USA, 2010). We learn from the *Nissan Leaf™ Commercial – Behind the Scenes* (Autoblogvideo 2010) that a real polar bear, Aggie, was used for a great part of the scenes, particularly for the bear and human embrace. The images of the arctic and the polar bear were taken from nature documentary footage and other images were digitalized (Autoblogvideo, 2010). The commercial crew members describe the polar bear as “astonishing,” “real beautiful,” “cuddly,” and “pretty cool” (Autoblogvideo, 2010). The commercial finalizes with the phrase “The 100% eclectic Nissan Leaf™. Innovation for the planet, innovation for all” (Nissan USA, 2010).

#### 3.4.5 Knut

During Knutmania a total of 14 songs about Knut were released (Children’s British Broadcasting Cooperation, 2007). Among those songs was a song of a nine-year-old girl named Kitty and her song was titled “Knut, der kleine Eisbär” (English: Knut the little polar bear). The song was released after Knut’s first public appearance at the Berlin Zoo (CBBC 2007).

Although in German, I found that the song was extremely catchy and asked a German friend to translate the song. The song narrates the story of Knut. However, in describing the polar bear words such as cuddly, soft, cute, cuddle, etc. are used (see to Appendix A).

### 3.5 Revenue

An electronic mail was sent out to the Environmental Defense Fund, World Wildlife Federation, Center for Biological Diversity, Nissan, and the Coca-Cola Company regarding revenue received through the use of polar bears (see Appendix B). A respond from EDF, CBD, the Coca-Cola Company, and Nissan was received. The Environmental Defense Fund stated that track of the different mailings are not conducted therefore the revenue received specifically form polar bears could not be obtained (see Appendix C). The Center for Biological Diversity states that they only had general figures available and sent a link to their most recent annual report (see Appendix D). The Coca-Cola Company stated that the gathering of information would require time that is not available, however, links to resources were given (see Appendix E). Upon inspection of the resources, a list of revenue was not found. Last, Nissan stated that if possible the requested information could be acquired by April 26 (Note: no correspondence was received by Nissan), refer to Appendix (F).

The lack of information of revenue makes it difficult to measure the success of the campaigns. Additionally, it also negates to inform the audience about how much of their financial contribution to spend in polar bear research.

### 3.6 Polar Bears in non-climate change advertisements

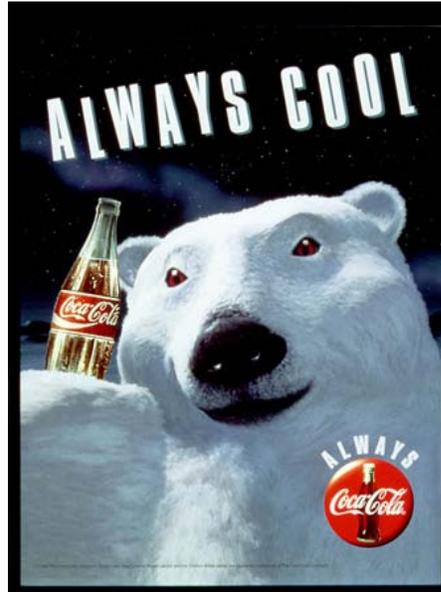


Figure 9: Coca-Cola Polar Bear

It is significant to note that polar bears have also been featured in advertisements that have no relation to climate change. For example, the Coca-Cola Company has featured polar bears in their product advertisements for several years (see Figure 9). In 1993 the Coca-Cola Company released its first polar bear commercial (The Coca-Cola Company, 2011). In the commercial, a group of polar bears gathered to watch the aurora borealis (the Northern lights) while drinking a Coca-Cola. Ken Stewart, the creator of the commercial, developed the commercial from the idea that people drink soda when they are at the movies (The Coca-Cola Company). For the polar bears, the aurora borealis represented the movies. After this successful advertisement, the Coca-Cola Company released several commercials during the Christmas holidays, making the polar bear a symbol of family unity.



Figure 10: Bundaberg Products

Similarly, an Australian company has a polar bear as part of the design of their label, Bundaberg Rum (see Figure 10). In 1994, Bundaberg Rum released an ad that featured polar bears drinking the rum. The polar bears are seen interacting with humans at a bar while drinking rum. Additionally, Bundaberg Rum has a polar bear mascot which promoted their product. Bundy R. Bear is featured in their modern advertisements (see Figure 11). Unlike the previous representations of polar bears, Bundy is depicted in a more masculine way.



Figure 11: Bundy R. Bear

To summarize, throughout this study, four major themes were evident in the campaigns: image events, emotionality, anthropomorphism, and irreparable hope. The campaigns in this analysis strived to bring awareness to the issue of climate change and the endangerment of polar bears by various means; i.e. video advertisements, visual illustrations found in the campaigns website. Based on the situational theory of publics, the campaigns targeted a wide-ranging audience. Mainly, the campaigns target audiences that recognize climate change as a problem by connecting polar bears to the issue of climate change. Audiences that perceive something can be done to solve the problem were able to contribute to the cause by donation to the campaign, adoption of polar bear or by the specific required action (i.e. choosing public transportation). The campaigns also targeted audience with different levels of involvement by allowing the audience to participate through various resources (i.e. donation, adoption, social networking, and organization membership).

## Chapter 5

### Conclusion

This analysis began after the viewing of a computer animated polar bear video in *An Inconvenient Truth*. The video in the film led to the exploration of the symbolical representation of polar bears in campaigns promoting climate change awareness. Despite the fact that the campaigns in this analysis purported to successfully use polar bears to raise awareness for climate change, the issue is much larger and requires additional audience collaboration. The reduction of the issue leads to the loss of information which leaves the audience unaware of the severity of climate change and how it impinges on their lives.

Although polar bears are symbolically a good representation of the effects of climate change, it is imperative to address the entire issue. Moreover, stories on other animals do not get as much recognition. For example, in September 2010 several thousands of walruses came to shore in northwest Alaska to rest because the ice they normally rest on had melted (Borenstein, 2010). Scientists stated this was not a first time occurrence; similar incidences happened in 2007 and 2009 (Borenstein, 2010). Scientists were mainly concerned about “the one-ton female walruses stampeding and crushing each other and their smaller calves” (Borenstein, 2010). Stories such as the one referenced above are disregarded because the audience fails to identify with the animal.

Subsequently, audiences can relate to polar bears which therefore make them a good representation of climate change. Campaigns have used illustrations of polar bears to create an emotional connection with the audience. Usually images of happiness/love are used to engage the audience. For example, a commonly used portrait is that of a mother polar bear and her cub(s). These portraits depict a softer side of the great white bear and enable the audience to see

them as nurturing. However, when it comes to requesting financial contributions from the audience, campaigns use images that can be considered as appealing to negative emotions. Images portraying polar bears alone on ice, swimming, and/or drowning are commonly used as a means of sympathy.

Furthermore, audience participation in environmental campaigns must go beyond a simple donation or adoption. The effortless solutions proposed by the campaigns allow only for a temporary resolution. Hardin (1968) identifies these solutions as technical solutions. Hardin (1968) defines technical solutions as “one that requires a change only in the techniques of the natural sciences, demanding little or nothing in the way of change in human values or ideas morality” (p. 1243). The only campaign that provided individual changes was the Coca-Cola Company. The Coca-Cola Company made the audience aware of their active role in combating climate change. Moreover, a better understanding of polar bear’s habitat is required in order to fully comprehend the greatness of the issue. Kaplan and Rogers (1995) state that “by recognizing that nature has its own laws and rules for survival, it is possible to live with nature and use it, but also put something back and allow it to be maintained” (p. 6).

In addition, the majority of the campaigns, WWF, EDF, CBC, focus on the effects that climate change has on the polar bear’s habitat but fail to address any causes. One organization, Plane Stupid, focuses solely on aviation as a cause of climate change but provides no any additional resources about polar bears. The two companies in this analysis can be associated with the ideology of consumerism. Although the products may want to promote climate change awareness, the underlying strategy is to create an identity with consumers. If the public buys products that promote climate change awareness, then the consumers are indirectly contributing to the cause the company is promoting. However, in consuming these products the audience

tends to contribute more to the cause of climate change by being unaware of the manufacturing and distribution of the product.

In order to implement successful climate change campaigns, it is vital addresses the causes and effects of climate change. In doing so we must take responsibility of our actions and rethink our individual lifestyles. The tragedy of the commons allows a re-evaluation on the way individuals use nature. Hardin (1968) states “the individual benefits as an individual form his ability to deny the truth even though society as a whole, of which he is part, suffers” (p. 1244). Since individuals are concerned with individual fulfillment, available resources are then in turn exploited. Hardin (1968) suggest the management of such resources is necessary in order to achieve sustainability.

Lastly, it is important to address the limitations that occurred during this analysis. First, although a generative criticism analysis was the method of choice, the study could have benefited from administering a survey measuring the audience’s perception of polar bears. The survey would have contributed to the concept of the audience having knowledge of the engagement of polar bears. Furthermore, the survey also could be a measure audience awareness of climate change. Second, the analysis consisted of examining five various organizations; three environmental organizations, two companies, and one non-profit organization. In doing so, the analysis limited an in depth exploration of the campaigns. In order to reduce the effects of these limitations, I propose that future research administered surveys to the public in order to assess their knowledge of polar bears, climate change, and environmental/corporation campaigns organizations.

The use of survey method would also provide supplementary data to situational theory of publics. The survey would allow a more accurate prediction and explanation of public response

to environmental issues, problems and conflicts and an insight to the public's communication behavior. The survey method could also provide thorough analysis of theory's perception variables which would assist in determining the types of audiences that the campaigns target. Lastly, a survey method would provide analytical data of the theory's two communication variables.

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Appendix A  
Knut little polar bear

Knut he is a cuddle bear

But he doesn't have a mother anymore

Anyways, he is sassy and happy and he is the star at the zoo

Little mischief all in white with four paws so soft and cuddly

Everyone loves Knut so much

Wonderful that you exist

Knut, Knut little polar bear of the zoo

Knut, Knut you are doing so good

Knut you little cuddle bear you are getting cuter

and walking you are good at too, keep it up, just stay brave

Baby bottle in your mouth, drink nice, that is healthy

After that you must go to sleep little Knut, sleep well

Knut, Knut little polar bear in the zoo

Knut, Knut you are doing so good

Knut, you little cuddle bear, it is not hard to like you

Petting you on the tummy, that makes you happy too

Your teeth are still so little, biting strong that's a must

Then soon you will get big and strong

Yes that is sure

Knut, Knut little polar bear in the zoo

Knut, Knut you are doing so good

Repeat 2xs

Appendix B  
Inquiry sent to organizations

Good afternoon,

I am a Graduate student at the University of Texas at El Paso. I'm currently doing my thesis on the emblematic use of polar bears to promote the climate change issue. I wanted to know if it was possible to get a list of estimated revenue the (insert organization name) receives through the polar bears.

If you have any questions pertaining to this study, please contact Gloria Letica Bebbber, Graduate Student, Department of Communication, 915-240-3058.

Thank you for your time,  
Gloria Bebbber

Appendix C  
Correspondence received from the Environmental Defense Fund

Ms. Bebber -

Thank you for your recent contact with Environmental Defense Fund and your interest in talking about us for a project.

Unfortunately, we do not keep track of which mailings use polar bears or not, so I don't have any type of data to give you.

Best of luck on your project, it sounds really interesting!

Best,

Kathryn

Kathryn Chiasson  
Member Services Associate

Environmental Defense Fund  
1875 Connecticut Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20009  
T 202 572 3391  
kchiasson@edf.org  
www.edf.org

Appendix D  
Correspondence received from Center for Biological Diversity

Hi Gloria,

My apologies for the delay in replying to you – I checked in with our staff regarding your inquiry and unfortunately we only have very general figures available. You can check our most recent annual report for those totals:

<http://www.biologicaldiversity.org/publications/reports/AnnualRpt2009.pdf>

On page 16 you can find our general financial info – including our overall program budget. We don't have specific figures on what revenue comes from polar bears though I can tell you anecdotally that our Polar Bear work is the one of our most popular and successful campaigns.

Best of luck to you on your research.

Best,  
Maria Seiferle Membership Assistant  
Center for Biological Diversity  
P.O. Box 710  
Tucson, AZ 85702-0710  
866-357-3349 toll free  
520-623-5252 ext. 323  
[www.biologicaldiversity.org](http://www.biologicaldiversity.org)  
Support the Center today!

Appendix E  
Correspondence received from the Coca-Cola Company

Thank you for contacting The Coca-Cola Company, Ms. Bebber. We are always pleased when friends of Coca-Cola take the time to contact us.

As with most well known companies, we receive a number of requests to participate in research papers, surveys and questionnaires. Although we would like to be of assistance, in many cases, providing accurate information would require more time for fact-finding and analysis than is available. The task is even more difficult due to the highly decentralized structure of our business and the unique relationship between The Coca-Cola Company and independently operated bottlers of Coca-Cola. Additionally, information regarding our marketing strategy is considered to be proprietary. We wish we could do more to assist you.

Our most recent Annual Report is an excellent source of information on our Company. From our Web site, choose "Investors," then "Financial Information."

Some other publications that are usually helpful include Beverage World, Beverage Digest, The Wall Street Journal, Advertising Age, and Ad Week. You may also check the following Web sites:

Beverage Digest  
[www.beverage-digest.com](http://www.beverage-digest.com)

Beverage World  
[www.beverageworld.com](http://www.beverageworld.com)

American Beverage Association  
<http://www.ameribev.org>

Brand Week  
[www.brandweek.com](http://www.brandweek.com)

We hope this information is helpful. Should you have additional questions or comments, please feel free to contact us again.

Cameron  
Industry and Consumer Affairs  
The Coca-Cola Company

Please use the record number below should you have additional questions.  
{ticketno:[8000357984]}

Interested in receiving the latest news from The Coca-Cola Company? Sign up now for our email alerts: <https://secure.alerts.thecoca-colacompany.com>

APPENDIX F  
Correspondence received from Nissan

Dear Gloria,

Thank you for taking the time to personally contact us about your interest in the Nissan LEAF.

I would have to say that your question would best be answered by our Marketing Department. I would be happy to look into getting the answer and I could get back to you by Tuesday 4/26/11 at the latest.

We appreciate your time, and encourage you to share our contact details with friends and family. For your convenience, we can be reached:

- By return email.
- Through our website at [www.NissanUSA.com](http://www.NissanUSA.com)
- By phone at 877-664-2738.

We're here to serve you from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. (CST) Monday through Friday, and 8:00 am to 3:00 pm (CST) Saturday.

Sincerely,  
Michelle  
Nissan EV Customer Support  
[evcustomersupport@nissan-usa.com](mailto:evcustomersupport@nissan-usa.com)  
1-877 NO GAS EV (664-2738)

## Curriculum Vita

Gloria L. Bebber was born on June 16, 1983 in El Paso, TX. She graduated from Silva Health Magnet High School in the spring of 2001 and entered the University of Texas at El Paso in the fall. While perusing her bachelor's degree in Communication Studies with a minor in Education, she worked at the Student Support Services Program on campus and student taught at Socorro High School and Morhead Middle School. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in May 2007 from the University of Texas at El Paso. She entered Graduate School at the University of Texas of El Paso in the spring of 2008. While in graduate school, she continued working at the Student Support Services Program as an Administrative Assistant.

Permanent address: 601 S. Mesa Hills Dr. Apt. 515  
El Paso, TX 79912

Work Experience: Office Assistant University of West Florida, Housing Maintenance  
Department Pensacola, FL (July 2010 – December 2010)

Administrative Assistant University of Texas at El Paso, Student Support  
Services Program El Paso, TX (January 2008 – April 2010)

Tutor El Paso Independent School District, El Paso High School  
El Paso, TX (September 2007 – December 2007)

Undergraduate Assistant University of Texas at El Paso, Student Support  
Services Program El Paso, TX (August 2004 – December 2006)