

Megan Ashun

Humanities

Ms. Small

December 6, 2023

You, single-handedly, are destroying the environment. You, the consumer, the civilian, the everyday person, are the reason why climate change is worsening. And now you have to fix it. “Recycle more!” “Go zero waste!” These statements are the sentiment fossil fuel-burning corporations want you to believe. Corporations such as Shell and the British Petroleum Company do not want you to hold them liable for being the reason why the planet is ever-warming. They want you to believe climate change is your fault. Why? High carbon emission companies do not want to take responsibility or action for their negative impacts on the environment. In the United States, only 20% - a shockingly low percentage - of companies are aligned with the Paris Agreement (Ziady). The exorbitant amount of carbon emissions produced by burning fossil fuels is of no concern to these corporations, as long they are making a steady profit. However, the same corporations that are large carbon emitters want you to know that they are actively participating in the fight against climate change - but without implementing any of the necessary changes. In the article, “The world’s biggest companies have made almost no progress on limiting global warming since 2018” by Hanna Ziady, the author expands on this topic using a straight argument; while in the video, “Fighting Climate Change (funny!),” Julie Nolke uses satire to depict the lack of action taken by these companies. Although the article written by Hanna Ziady attempts to draw attention to the inadequate effort made by these corporations to

combat climate change, “Fighting Climate Change (funny!)” by Julie Nolke more effectively conveys this message in the form of a humorous video through the use of parody.

Ziady uses diction to emphasize the low environmental efforts made by corporations, but fails to effectively compare the inaction to an exemplary company. The article reads, “The vast majority of the world’s biggest companies have done almost nothing in the past five years to cut their planet-heating pollution enough to avoid catastrophic climate change” (Ziady). In this quote, Ziady emphasizes the lack of action by corporations through the use of ‘almost nothing,’ and the significant impact of climate change as ‘catastrophic.’ The use of these words aids in amplifying the seriousness of climate change against the minimal improvement companies have made environmental-wise. However, this sentence leads the reader to ask what action the companies have taken. Since ‘almost nothing’ does not mean *zero* action was taken, it weakens Ziady’s argument since ‘almost nothing’ is a subjective statement when not in comparison to a statistic. This quote does not argue what the action of these companies is relative to. Although this example of word choice can emphasize how little the companies are doing to help reverse climate change, it fails to effectively compare it to a business heading action in the positive direction in the fight against climate change.

In comparison, Nolke uses word choice to mock how corporations use money as an appeal to logos. Throughout the video, “Fighting Climate Change (funny!),” Nolke parodies the head of a corporation creating an informational video about the “action” they are taking to fight climate change. A common logical appeal that companies make to consumers about their environmental efforts is the amount of money they are contributing to combat climate change. If a company spends a large amount of money on environmental efforts, logically, they are taking action to make their practices more eco-friendly. However, this is not always the case. In this

video, Nolke uses diction to ridicule this tactic. Nolke states, “Builders have invested literally tens and tens of dollars in the latest carbon capture technology.” Oftentimes, one can often hear of a company spending “millions of millions of dollars” to fight climate change. “Tens and tens of dollars” is a shockingly low amount compared to the millions of dollars corporations wave around in the face of consumers. Nolke uses word choice through the use of “tens and ten of dollars” to mock how corporations use money as a logical appeal to civilians.

High-emission corporations need to be held accountable for their lackadaisical attitude towards the environment - and that is the job of civilians. The article and the satirical video both aimed to achieve this goal, but the video was more effective in doing so in its clever use of parody and diction.

## Works Cited

- Nolke, Julie. "Fighting Climate Change (Funny!)." *Www.youtube.com*, 9 Sept. 2021,  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=FZecqIWBUvU&ab\\_channel=JulieNolke](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FZecqIWBUvU&ab_channel=JulieNolke). Accessed 6 Dec.  
2023.
- Ziady, Hanna. "The World's Biggest Companies Have Made Almost No Progress on Limiting  
Global Warming since 2018 | CNN Business." *CNN*, 8 June 2023,  
[www.cnn.com/2023/06/08/energy/companies-greenhouse-gas-emissions-targets/index.ht  
ml#:~:text=The%20vast%20majority%20of%20the](http://www.cnn.com/2023/06/08/energy/companies-greenhouse-gas-emissions-targets/index.html#:~:text=The%20vast%20majority%20of%20the). Accessed 5 Dec. 2023.